

No inter-party deals signed but sense grows that Labour can win

though there were no signs of a deal that would exclusively ensure that Mr Callaghan and his Government will win tonight's confidence vote and avert a general election, there was a spreading sense in the Commons last night that

Labour can win the crucial vote, David Wood writes. The bids of the 13 Liberal and 8 United Ulster Unionist Coalition MPs for concessions in exchange for votes were still on the Prime Minister's table. The Ulster group is still divided.

Prime Minister confident at question time

David Wood
Editorial Editor
A deal had been made at the time writing last night that would surely ensure that Mr Callaghan and his Government will win the confidence vote in the Commons tonight and avert a general election. But the 13 Liberals and the eight United Ulster Unionists for concessions in exchange for votes were on the Prime Minister's table.

Mr Steel, the Liberal Leader, has re

signed in effect a contractual under

standing in return for Liberal

part that the Government will trim its

social safety net and do nothing without

inter-party consultation so far as the

Government's "social contract" with

TUC would be added to its contract

to the Liberal platoon of MPs in the

Commons.

In James Molyneaux, reinforced by

Mr Enoch Powell, presents over a still

group of eight UUUCs. It

is not clear what bargain Mr Callaghan

consciously made for their

in whole or part, though it is

now behind the scenes that ministers

have considered a proposal for

Ulster committee at Westminster

to handle the primary legisla

tion for Northern Ireland, which, since

abolition of Stormont, has gone

through Parliament as statutory

measures.

All the signs were that Mr Callaghan

was alert for a voting deal to make

Government's survival tonight sure

does not want a general election

if the economy is in better trim, but

will not shrink from one if he loses

confidence vote. Nevertheless, there

is a limit to the humble pie he must

spy ring
passed Nato
secrets
or 14 years

on Charles Hargrove

irs, March 22

Four Frenchmen and an alias arrested by the French anti-spy organization have been charged with membership for the past 14 years a spy ring working for an unnamed East European country. They will be tried by a security court.

Both military and industrial bosses were involved, police headquarters said. Information transmitted about aircraft construction, the infrastructure protection of military and civilian air bases, and on Nato defence systems, according to the DST (Direction de la Surveillance du Patrimoine), whose agents made final arrest yesterday, the leader of the organization was Yugoslav-born naturalized Frenchman, M. Serge Fablet, manager of a small company specializing in fire detection systems.

We had clients in the whole of France, notably in Egypt and the United States, but none in Asia. M. Fablet died in 1976. One of the 10 employees, he first told reporters: "Our best client in France was the Electricity Board." He and his colleagues refuse to believe that the managing director could have been a spy for so many years.

All five accused had well-known positions or enjoyed a comfortable retirement: Roger aged 44, was a former controller employed by the Aviation Department; M. Lefebvre, aged 54, is an unemployed by the CII metal-Bull Company; G. Ferrero, aged 53, is on staff; M. Fabre, and M. Dassier, aged 44, was managing in a small industrial firm.

According to the DST claim to have found a highly sophisticated transmission system at headquarters of the company, which M. Fabre was at the time of the Yvelines, a few hours after a documentary film about the school had been shown on Panorama, the BBC television programme. Mr Jones said yesterday that he was convinced that the fire had no connection with

Fire at 'Panorama' school: Mr Edward Jones, Headmaster of Faraday Comprehensive School, at Acton, London, standing by the ruins of a classroom that was burnt to the ground on Monday evening, only a few hours after a documentary film about the school had been shown on Panorama, the BBC television programme.

Mr Jones said yesterday that he was convinced that the fire had no connection with

the programme, about which parents, teachers and pupils at the school had complained. That film showed children smoking after school, reading comics in class and interrupting teachers. Of 15 hours of filming, only 50 minutes was shown, and Mr Jones said many of the positive aspects of the school had been cut. He said, however, that what was shown was true. After a special meeting last night

the school staff issued a statement condemning the portrayal, which was directed by Miss Angela Pope. They maintained that written assurances by Miss Pope to give a balanced view had been broken. Situations had been contrived to give an adverse impression, they said. Miss Pope was not available to comment yesterday, but the BBC said that all complaints would be dealt with individually.

Cuban advisers said to be in command of Katangan forces invading Zaire

From Fred Emery
Washington, March 22

Cuban military advisers in Angola are commanding and coordinating up to six separate combat operations by the Katangan forces invading Zaire, according to a highly placed source in the Carter Administration. This assessment is believed to be based on new intelligence from intercepted radio commands from the Cubans to the invaders.

Nothing has yet been said publicly here. The official line remains that there is no "hard evidence" that Cuban forces are operating in Zaire. But to the administration that distinction is irrelevant when the Cubans are, as the sources believe, clearly directing opera

tions from just across the Angolan border. There is deepening concern within the Administration over the Zaire situation, and some evident perplexity about what to do next. It is firmly held that the Cubans would not be operating without Soviet permission, and the issue is now among those to be raised with the Kremlin leadership by Mr Cyrus Vance, the Secretary of State, when he visits Moscow next week.

However, the memory of the Russians' refusal to impose restraint in Angola last year has bred scepticism that much can be hoped for from the Russians.

There is also scepticism, within the Administration, over

how much can be hoped for

Carter reform plan for US elections

Sleeping changes in the American electoral laws have been proposed by President Carter. They include abolition of the electoral college system in presidential elections; the financing of congressional elections out of public funds, already introduced for presidential contests; and reforms to make voter registration much easier.

Radio changes: Scotland and Wales are to have their own networks in changes planned for BBC Radio 4

Rail improvements: British Rail's new timetable introduces improved cross-country and provincial services

South Korea: Opposition leader and 17 others jailed for criticizing the constitution and emergency decrees

Muslim loses appeal: A Muslim teacher who resigned when refused time off to go to a mosque failed in his claim for unfair dismissal in the Court of Appeal

Yugoslavia: A four-page Special Report on President Tito's unique brand of socialism

Sixty die in Iranian earthquake

TEHRAN, March 22.—A powerful earthquake struck the Luristan area of southern Iran early today, killing at least 60 people and causing widespread damage, the official radio reported.

The earthquake, registering seven on the Richter scale, had its epicentre in the Strait of Hormuz at the mouth of the Gulf.

Most of the deaths occurred in villages round the port city of Bandar Abbas. No casualties have been reported so far from the city itself, although many buildings were badly damaged.

Air Force transport aircraft began flying emergency supplies from Tehran this morning, and Mr. Hosseini, the Prime Minister, is coordinating relief operations.

Reuter

10,300 fall in jobless a 'tonic' for ministers

By Melvyn Westlake

The Hague, March 22
For the second consecutive month the trend of unemployment has fallen. With the possibility of an early general election, the latest figures, which contradict official and private forecasts, are extremely welcome to ministers.

The figures, published yesterday by the Department of Employment, show a fall of 10,300 in the number of people registered as unemployed, reducing the total jobless to 1,268,100, or 5.5 per cent of the workforce. That is after adjustment for seasonal influences and excluding school-leavers. It brings the total since January to 17,000.

Mr Booth, Secretary of State for Employment, described the trend as a "spring tonic". The drop in the unadjusted jobless total was sharper still, by 36,800 to 1,326,400. The decline was driven by most regions, with only East Anglia, east Midlands and Scotland failing to register a drop in the number of unemployed.

"I regret deeply that this decision-making process has taken so much time and has resulted in so many anomalies being broken," Mr. den Uyl said. "At this moment it seems peculiar to me," he added, "that this Cabinet cannot fulfil its task just two months before elections are due. It is up to Parliament to decide whose fault that is."

Elections are due on May 25.

The immediate cause of the Government's collapse was disagreement between the 10 Progressive and the six Christian Democratic ministers about land ownership law reform. The real cause was a climax to pre-election sparring between the different factions both in and outside the coalition.

Ever since Mr Andries van Agt, the present Minister of Justice and Vice-Premier, was nominated for the office of Prime Minister by the Christian Democratic parties, who plan to contest this election for the first time as a united group, the Cabinet has moved from one crisis to another. The atmosphere within the Cabinet, where Mr van Agt faced his

Dutch Cabinet resigns after bitter battle over land reform plan

From Sue Masterman
The Hague, March 22

The bitterest moment in my political career was how Mr. den Uyl, the Dutch Socialist Prime Minister, announced to Parliament tonight that his Government had collapsed.

The six Christian Democratic ministers in the 16-strong Dutch centre-left Cabinet had resigned earlier in the day. As a result, the Dutch Prime Minister informed Queen Juliana later in the afternoon that the Government had collapsed.

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HOME NEWS

Union anger over public-spending cuts 'betraying' social contract a crucial issue in pay-pact talks

By Christopher Thomas
Labour Reporter

Trade union anger over the "betrayal" of the social contract by the imposition of public-spending cuts emerged yesterday as a crucial issue in the negotiation of a new pay pact from August.

A one-day union conference in London on the "social wage" uncovered the intense bitterness felt by all public-sector unions. The usually moderate National and Local Government Officers' Association (Nalgo) will face strong pressure in June to withdraw from the pay contract.

The mood of yesterday's conference at Central Hall, Westminster, organized by the National Steering Committee Against the Cuts, was militant. Union after union condemned the cuts. Mr Bernard Dix, assistant general secretary of the National Union of Public Employees, said the TUC General Council should have its "backside kicked".

He added: "The social contract was agreed last June. In July and December there were cuts in public spending. There has been a lack of a fighting response from the TUC, which

encouraged the Tories, who feel that the ground has already been softened up."

The preliminary agenda for the Nalgo conference in Scarborough contains several motions demanding an end to the social contract because of continued erosion in public spending. Sheffield branch, referring to "a situation in which the unions have restricted wage demands but the Government has not responded by keeping its side of the contract."

Mr Albert Spawwick, general secretary of the Confederation of Health Service Employees, said his union was bestirred about making a decision on the next pay deal "until we see the sums."

Central region states: "The social contract has been repeatedly broken by the Government and can no longer be treated by Nalgo as a binding agreement. Reductions in most areas have meant a drastic lowering of services to the public and a higher rate of unemployment." Several other unions use similar terms.

The Federation of Professional Officers' Associations, comprising the senior profes-

sional and managerial unions in local government, which is not affiliated to the TUC but is officially "independent" under the Employment Protection Act, has expressed "grave concern" at the impact of income policies on senior local government staff.

It says in a letter to the Secretary of State for the Exchequer that differentials reflecting responsibility levels within departments have been narrowed or even eliminated.

Mr Albert Spawwick, general secretary of the Confederation of Health Service Employees, said his union was bestirred about making a decision on the next pay deal "until we see the sums."

Mr Joseph Whelan, an executive member of the National Union of Mineworkers, saw public spending cuts as "part and parcel of a general attack on the living standards of the mass of working people".

Mr Campbell Christie, assistant general secretary of the Society of Civil and Public Services, said that as a result of giving more tax relief to industry, taxation on wage-earners had increased. Taxation should be distributed more equitably.

More union pressure on MPs to save Government

By Paul Routledge
Labour Editor

As union pressure on MPs to save the Labour Government mounted yesterday Mr David Bassett, general secretary of the General and Municipal Workers' Union and one of the TUC's prominent negotiators, predicted that Mr Callaghan would stay in office.

He said the Government had begun to overcome the nation's difficulties to the basis of consensus. "The Tories do not understand what consensus means," he said.

"Our industrial strategy is beginning to work and the Government's economic policies are showing results. There are still many problems, but these problems are best solved by a Labour Government".

Pressure on Scottish nationalist MPs to drop their backing for Mrs Thatcher increased from two quarters. The Scottish TUC warned the nationalist party that if they helped to bring down the Administration they would open the door to the most reactionary government since the 1930s.

In a statement the STUC General Council said a defeat of the Government would be particularly catastrophic for working people.

It added: "They could shut the door on any possibility of meaningful devolution for a long time to come."

Mr Lawrence Daly, general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers, also appealed to the Scottish nationalist and Scottish Labour Party MPs to support the Government in their own long-term interests.

Labour's parliamentary position will be discussed at this morning's meeting of the TUC General Council. Mr Ian Murray, TUC general secretary, has issued a statement of support for the Government.

Welsh pressure: Mr George Wright, general secretary of the Wales TUC, sent a telegram to Mr Dafydd Thomas, Plaid Cymru MP for Merioneth, appealing to him not to vote for the Tories (the Press Association reports). Mr Thomas said: "We do not consider it our parliamentary responsibility to sustain a Labour government that has broken its manifesto pledges to Wales."

The weakness of the Labour organization in the West of Scotland has been amply demon-

Ulster Unionists try to squeeze out a few more drops of blood

By David Leigh
Political Staff

The eight Ulster Unionists were split last night after a fierce party meeting during which Mr James Moloney, their leader, and Mr Enoch Powell tried to persuade them to support the Labour Government today.

The Unionists abandoned the meeting after an hour and a half, while Mr Moloney went to consult Mr Foot in the hope of improving the Government's offer. That consists of four more seats for Ulster in the Commons. Westminister sources say, and the value of devolution of the old Ulster shire of the old Stormont.

Later last night Mr Foot's response. The prospects looked relatively bright for at least an Ulster abstention, provided the domestic pressure from the provinces does not prove too heavy for the MPX to bear.

The Ulstermen did not lay a series of demands on the table when they saw the Prime Minister earlier this week; they have been waiting to see what the Government might offer.

Meanwhile Mr William Craig,

made his own offer to the Government. It had been assumed that he would vote against them, but he is now saying that he will not if they accept a scheme for devolution to Northern Ireland as well as Scotland and Wales.

He has also approached the Scottish nationalists, to whom Mr Callaghan went out of his way to be friendly at question time yesterday, saying he hoped they could eventually be coaxed back into supporting Labour in Parliament.

The rebel Scottish Labour pair, Mr Sillars and Mr Robertson, also have an offer of support on the table, provided the devolution guillotine is rejected this session and made a vote of confidence.

Some MPs were speculating last night that the devolution dimension, which is the main immediate cause of the Government's predicament, may turn out to be the key to renewing the life of the Government.

The Liberals are anxious to see the return of a strengthened devolution Bill, and a number of Labour MPs who opposed the guillotine are now prepared, having seen the outcome, to reconsider their position.

Survey of the ill and uncommitted

A survey of uncommitted and sick members of Parliament was carried out by The Times last night.

Mr Reg Prentice, Labour MP for Newham, North-East, had still not decided yesterday how he would vote, but if he became clear that he was more likely to abstain than support the Conservative motion. He said he would support the Government only if there was a satisfactory deal with the Liberals.

Mr John Ryman, Labour MP for Blyth, has also reserved his position.

A spokesman for Mr Frank Maguire, the independent member for Fermanagh and South Tyrone, who usually votes with the Liberals, would say only that the MP will give his answer at 10 o'clock on Wednesday night.

Mr Thomas Listerick, Labour MP for Birmingham, Selly Oak, who is seriously ill in hospital after a heart attack, will not attend to vote. His wife said: "He is extremely ill and there is absolutely no chance that he will turn up."

Mr Donald Anderson, Labour MP for Swansea East, who is ill, will be able to support the Government.

Mr Alfred Broughton, Labour MP for Batley and Morley, who has been unwell, would certainly attend to vote for the Government. Lady Broughton said:

Mr Raymond Fletcher, Labour MP for Ilkeston, who suffered a heart attack, said he was making good progress and would be at Westminster.

The SNP is genuinely delighted at the prospect of an election, coming so soon after the defeat of the guillotine on the devolution Bill.

The Liberals are probably in the worst position: only 30 candidates have so far been adopted from a possible 40 or 50, and the party has been under heavy attack over its failure to support the devolution Bill guillotine.

The breakaway Scottish Labour Party is also ill prepared. It has been planning to field six candidates, but apart from its two existing MPs has chosen only a candidate for Aberdeen, North.

Parties **Govern-
ment
votes** **Oppos-
ition
votes** **Uncom-
mitted**

| | | | |
|---|------------|------------|-----------|
| Labour | 307 | | |
| SDP | 1 | | |
| Ind. (Mr. Frank Maguire) | 1 | | |
| Conservative | 278 | | |
| Plaid Cymru | 11 | | |
| Ind. Ulster Unionists (Mr. Frank Maguire and Mr. Kilfoder) | 3 | | |
| Ulster Unionist | 2 | | |
| Scottish National Party | 13 | | |
| Labour Party | 2 | | |
| Totals | 309 | 292 | 37 |

Mr Tom Listerick, too ill to vote, the Liberal, three charmed and two vacancies account for seven non-voting seats.

Train drivers claim 'major breakthrough' in pay talks

By Our Labour Editor

Militant train drivers' leaders last night claimed a "major breakthrough" in wage bargaining after agreeing a phase-two settlement that does not bind the footplatemen to a year with our wage improvements.

The executive of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (Aslef) voted unanimously to accept a revised offer from the British Railways Board that gives rises of £2.50 to £4 a week and better sick pay. A clause stipulating that the agreement should run for twelve months from April 25 has been deleted under pressure from the drivers.

The footplatemen's insistence that their agreement should not rule out the prospect of further increases when wage restraint rules are relaxed has already been cited by the miners as sup-

porting evidence in the demand for TUC approval for a pit-productivity deal starting in August, only five months after their phase two deal.

Mr Ray Buckton, general secretary of Aslef, described the board's acceptance of its bargaining arguments as a major breakthrough.

The drivers' union has been a consistent opponent of wage restraint, and is now expected to carry on its campaign against a restrictive new income policy into the heart of the TUC argument over phase three. In submitting the wage claim Aslef said that if pay restraint was relaxed a 5 per cent increase consistent with present pay policy would be regarded as only an interim settlement, and it would be back for more when phase two expires at the end of July.

Charity protest over telegram to Liberal leader

From Martin Ruckley

Edinburgh

The East Anglian Shelter housing aid centre yesterday dissociated itself from a telegram sent by six charities, including Shelter, to Mr Steel, the Liberal leader, on Monday.

The telegram said a government defeat tonight would kill the Housing (Homeless Persons) Bill, which he is a sponsor.

Mr James Spurling, the East Anglian centre's chairman, said the Mr Stephen Ross, Liberal MP for the Isle of Wight, and the Bill's main sponsor, and Mr Hugh Rossi, Conservative spokesman, had both made clear to him that its importance was recognized.

In a telegram of its own to Mr Steel yesterday the centre said: "the failure of Labour housing policy, which is making two hundred extra houses empty every day", was the main cause of homelessness.

Nationalists are only party in Scotland that would relish contest at the polls

From Martin Ruckley

Edinburgh

As the political parties in Scotland contemplate the possibility of an election a general

lament can be heard to the effect that the whole thing would be much better if it could be postponed for a few more months.

Only the Scottish National

Party looks forward to a contest with real relish. The other parties have responded to the possible challenge with varying degrees of vigour, but the underlying feeling is that none is really ready for a general election now.

Both the Labour and Conservative parties have selected candidates for most constituencies and should have adequate funds to mount their campaigns. But they face great difficulties in other fields.

The weakness of the Labour

organization in the West of Scotland has been amply demon-

strated by the nationalists, and the Labour Party in Scotland is in the middle of a complete change of national officers.

Although it emerged from its recent conference at Perth in apparently fine fettle, the unanimity of the delegates about devolution concealed just what to keep all the power at Westminster.

The Conservatives have been caught at an awkward time:

they have been back-tracking on their commitment to devolution, but have yet to formulate any new policy.

In an election campaign they are likely to simply admit that they are seriously split between those favouring a directly elected assembly and those, including the spokesman on Scotland, Mr Edward Taylor, who are anti-devolution. Such frankness may be sensible but it will not necessarily satisfy electors

wondering which way to vote.

The Conservative and Labour

Parties will have at least one policy in common: they will

be warning the Scottish people of the dangers of the SNP and the likelihood that a vote for the nationalists could lead to independence. Nor that such splits are likely to worry the SNP, which will simply return to the "Unionist" parties just west to keep all the power at Westminster.

The SNP is genuinely delighted at the prospect of an election, coming so soon after the defeat of the guillotine on the devolution Bill.

The Liberals are probably in the worst position: only 30 candidates have so far been adopted from a possible 40 or 50, and the party has been under heavy attack over its failure to support the devolution Bill guillotine.

The breakaway Scottish Labour Party is also ill prepared.

It has been planning to field six candidates, but apart from its two existing MPs has chosen only a candidate for Aberdeen, North.

'No danger from asbestos to rail passengers

British Rail disclosed yesterday that 7,000 of its 17,500 passenger coaches are fitted with blue asbestos insulation, a potential source of lung cancer.

But unlike the drivers' and guards' compartments, on which modifications are to be made, the insulation on these coaches, all built before 1967, is sealed behind wall and ceiling panels, and "there is no danger whatever to passengers", British Rail said yesterday.

The disclosure came after a call for an independent inquiry by the National Association of Rail Passengers.

In the drivers' and guards' compartments the insulation is much more liable to exposure by ducts and removable panels, and £7m is to be spent on removing or sealing it over the next four years.

Radio outposts

The BBC is to open local radio stations on Orkney and Shetland on May 2.



"Somewhere, what with all these clouds, and all this air, There must be a rare name, somewhere... How do you like 'Cloud-Cuckoo Land'?" Aristophanes

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HOME NEWS

Regional constituency plans for holding EEC poll on schedule

By George Clark
Political Correspondent

An appeal to the Government to adopt proportional representation for direct elections to the European Parliament in May/June 1978, by the use of regional multi-member constituencies, was issued by an all-party group of MPs.

They hoped to influence the course of talks going on between Mr Callaghan and the minority parties about the Government's legislation programme.

The MPs are Mr John Mackintosh (Berwick and East Lothian, Lab), Mr Richard Wood (Erdington, C), Mr Russell Judd (Inverness, L), Mrs Margaret Bain (Dumbartonshire, East, Scot, Nat), Mr David Wigley (Carmarthen, Pl), and Sir Nigel Fisher (Kingston upon Thames, Surbiton, C).

"We believe the impasse over direct elections to the European Parliament can be broken, the elections can be held on schedule and the result can be fair and sensible", they said. "We believe there would be wide support in all parts of the House of Commons for a regional basis for the elections outlined here."

They issued a map showing the 31 British seats in the European Parliament distributed in a good turn-out.

Marriage rule changed for immigrants

By a Staff Reporter

Immigrant men will no longer be able to settle in the United Kingdom by entering into marriages of convenience with United Kingdom nationals. Amendments to the immigration rules were laid before Parliament yesterday and came into immediate force. They are designed to deal with what the Home Office regards as "an abuse on a significant scale".

The amendments provide that where a marriage overseas has recently been contracted the husband will no longer be granted settlement on arrival in this country but will be admitted for a period of up to 12 months before settlement is considered. That will apply also to marriages contracted in the United Kingdom.

There is to be specific power to refuse admission or settlement at the outset or after the twelve-month period where the marriage is believed to be one of convenience.

Pay code forbids increase in peers' expenses

Peers cannot have their expenses increased for attending the House of Lords, because of the pay policy. After the publication yesterday of a report by the review body on top salaries, recommending rises, the Government said peers staying in London overnight could have another £3 a day.

The review body had recommended that peers, who receive a maximum allowance of £13.50 a day, should be given a new maximum of £24.50 if they stayed overnight.

It also proposed to separate the allowance into four different parts: £11 for staying overnight, £6.50 for subsistence during the day, £4 for secretarial costs and a £3 maximum for postage and other costs.

Mr Foot, as Lord President of the Council, said in a Commons written reply yesterday that the Government had decided to defer, until pay policy permits, detailed consideration of the report on Top Salaries, Report No 9 (Stationery Office, 75p).

Segregated schools protest in Ulst

From Christer Walker
Belfast

A new controversy is gathering momentum in Northern Ireland over question of religiously stated schooling, which politicians regard as one of main causes of continuing strife.

It began this week when a group of Roman Catholic mothers held what they called a "prayer in" outside Roman Catholic church in the normally unionist town of Newtownards.

The two members of a pressure group, All Children Together, were protesting against the refusal by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor, Philip, to confirm seven children because they did not attend Roman Catholic school.

Among those taking part was Mrs Elizabeth Benton, a Roman Catholic widow from the predominantly Protestant seaside resort of Bangor. Her two sons belong to a group of about 15 children from the district refusing confirmation because they attend state schools, which, in divided society of Ulster, are almost Protestant.

Because of religious complexion of areas, the nearest suitable Roman Catholic school is 14 miles away.

All Children Together demands that the Government should hold a conference to discuss ways of breaking down Ulster's religious barriers.

"The widest of having to demonstrate this way was very distasteful to us, but we believed it was necessary to attract attention to a very serious point", Mrs Benton said yesterday. "We hope that Catholic boys in the rest of Britain will note and help to bring an injustice to an end."

Tribunal closes loophole in equality law

By Diana Lee

A judge by the Employment Appeal Tribunal yesterday in equal-pay cases closed a loophole in the Equal Pay Act. It will now be much more difficult for employers to "get round the Act by arranging that variation in the pay of male female workers is historical only".

The coupling, which is binding all industrial tribunals, has similar cases, could affect pay and status of thousands of women.

See Report, page 9



Patu, a polar bear cub born on November 29 last year, with Mosa, his mother, at Whipsnade Zoo. He is Mosa's second cub.

Lord Pitt becomes first black leader of official race organization

By a Staff Reporter

Lord Pitt of Hampstead, who three years ago became the first black chairman of the Greater London Council, now becomes the first immigrant to head a national race relations body. He has been appointed chairman of the Community Relations Commission for the remaining weeks of that body's existence.

Lord Pitt, who has been one

of the Race Relations Board.

But only four of the 15 commissioners on the new body have been appointed so far; the 11 others are expected to be named within the next week. There seems, therefore, little chance that the Race Relations Act, 1976, under which the commission is being set up, will come fully into effect before late May.

Mr David Lane, chairman-designate of the new commission, said last night that it must win the consent and support of the whole population if it was to succeed. He told the community relations council at Bexley, Greater London, that Parliament had not intended the Race Relations Act to place minorities in a position of privilege.

The law was not meant to confer special advantages on minorities but to help remove some of the special disadvan-

tages from which many members of minority groups suffered.

The commission and the race equality relations committee had to convince the sceptics that equal rights meant equal rights for all, and that fair treatment for minorities would not involve unfair treatment for others.

Mr Boeham Carter is to take

up a full-time position as chairman of the independent Outer Circle Policy Unit, a post he has held on a part-time basis since September, when the unit was set up with a £50,000 three-year grant from the Rowntree Trust.

The unit, which at present consists of only Mr Boeham Carter, Mr James Corfard, former professor of politics at Edinburgh University, and an assistant, researches and prepares memoranda on matters of public policy, such as devolution, the Official Secrets Act, and income tax reform.

The votes of the Conservatives, who may have nearly 200 of the 800 conference delegates, will be crucial because the voting is by single transferable vote. The Conservatives' own candidate is Mr Steven Moon, of Birmingham University.

Mr Mulley, Secretary of State for Defence, announced in the Commons yesterday that retirement for short-term aircrew officers will be paid after all.

Earlier this year the Government announced that it was to review a decision to commute into a pension payable from the age of 60, the tax-free gratuity that some Royal Navy and RAF aircrew have been promised at the end of their short-service engagements.

After criticism that the

Ministry of Defence would be in breach of contract if it did not pay the gratuities, Mr Mulley said the 450 officers affected would have the option after April, 1978, to leave after eight or 12 years' service with a tax-free gratuity of £4,353 and £3,000 respectively.

Rabies precaution

Mr Joseph Timms, of Royal Oak Lane, Pirton, Herefordshire, who was attacked by a pack of dogs in Egypt, is undergoing treatment at home as a precaution against rabies.

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New networks planned in BBC radio changes

By Kenneth Gosling

Scotland and Wales will have their own networks under plans for changes to BBC Radio. "They will be a fact and not just a caption in *Red Times*," Mr Ian McIntyre, controller, Radio 4, said yesterday.

Radio 4 becomes national network on 1500m long wave at the end of next year and will be in full competition with the regions.

There has been criticism that Scotland and Wales had to take the Radio 4 outlet from London with regional "options", which is one reason for the success of commercial channels.

No timetable for the changes has been worked out yet. Mr McIntyre, announcing plans for Radio 4 until the end of the year, said: "It is not easy for the national regions but it is something they are beginning to work on."

Under Mr McIntyre's plans changes will be made to existing programmes and some new ones introduced. He gave a broad outline of his thinking in an exclusive interview in *The Times* last December. His main theme is diversification, closely followed by competition.

"Competition is up bat thing in broadcasting, both internally and externally", he said yesterday. "This will mean competition in news bulletins.

Tory students hold key to NUS elections

By Judith Judd, of *The Times Higher Education Supplement*

Conservative students almost certainly hold the key to next week's National Union of Students elections.

Although the Broad Left, the ruling group of Labour and Communists, Party students are sure to retain its hold on the union, Mr Charles Clarke, the retiring president, said yesterday that the Federation of Conservative Students would be an important force in the elections at the national conference.

He believed that Miss Susan Skipper, the Broad Left's candidate for president and a member of the Communist Party executive, would have a hard fight against Mr Hugh Lamming, the candidate of the ultra-left Socialist Students' Alliance.

The votes of the Conservatives, who may have nearly 200 of the 800 conference delegates, will be crucial because the voting is by single transferable vote. The Conservatives' own candidate is Mr Steven Moon, of Birmingham University.

THF Hotels

This picture shows the White Hart in New York and the Green House in London. THF have

good interests in travel and leisure too.

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HOME NEWS

Sale of council homes to tenants and more mobility of labour advocated to aid the North

From John Charlton

The sale of council houses to tenants and the relaxation of local authorities' allocation rules are advocated in the latest plan for increasing the prosperity of the North of England.

In its final report after two and a half years' work the Northern Region Strategy Team emphasizes the need for increased mobility of labour as part of its aim to bring the region's high unemployment rates down to the national average and make it a more attractive place.

The team believes that by the 1980s the total housing stock in most parts of Northumberland, Durham, Cumbria, Tyne and Wear, and Cleveland will be in balance with the number of families in existing homes.

It says local authorities should give council tenants the chance to buy their homes. They should also substantially reduce the rate of new house building to release financial resources for the creation of new industry and jobs.

It also suggests relaxations in local authorities' criteria of local residence for admission to council house waiting lists; and the establishment of a region-wide exchange bureau to help council tenants wanting to exchange accommodation with people in other areas.

Bogus business got £18,000 goods, court told

A man who set up a bogus business, with a £15 bank account obtained goods worth £18,000 from large companies, it was stated at Winchester Crown Court yesterday.

Alan Brookes, aged 47, of Pool Road, Leicester, who pleaded guilty to obtaining by deception, burglary and being equipped for theft and asked for 24 similar offences to be considered, was jailed for seven years.

Judge Starforth Hill, QC, commented: "Some companies must want their heads tested, accepting cheques from a man in an unsupervised room with no reference."

Cashier to appeal

James Montellier, a Sobe bookshop cashier, of Crewdon Road, Stockwell, London, was sentenced at Marlborough Street Magistrates' Court yesterday to two months' imprisonment for having obscene magazines for gain. He was freed on bail pending an appeal.

Man pretended wife he had killed was alive, court told

From Our Correspondent

For years after a man had murdered his wife he sent her sister letters and Christmas cards purporting to come from them both and saying that all was well, it was stated at St Albans Crown Court, Hertfordshire, yesterday.

In fact her body was lying in a shallow grave in the garden of the bungalow where they had lived for the 18 years of their marriage, the court was told.

Ronald Chambers, aged 51, of Eaves Street, Blackpool, pleaded not guilty to murdering his wife, Mavis, in 1971.

Mr Peter Crowder, QC, for the prosecution, said: "This is the story of a man who came back one night and for some reason killed his wife with two stab wounds in the chest. Having killed her, he dug a shallow grave in the garden of the bungalow."

"Shortly afterwards he sold the bungalow and the greater part of its contents, and left the motive was robbery."

Mr Crowder said that in letters, which were sent in 1972, 1973 and 1974, to his sister, Mrs Brenda Dickinson, Mrs Chambers had written to give the impression his wife was still alive and everything was well.

The court was told that Mrs Dickinson, of Mangrove Road, Luton, went to the police after becoming suspicious about her sister's whereabouts.

The police searched the house and garden of the couple's former home in West Hill Road, Luton, and the body was discovered by two highly trained Alsatian dogs.

Mr Crowder said the couple married in 1953 but had no children.

The hearing was adjourned.

Woman, 84, murdered

Miss Margaret Moore, aged 84, was found stabbed to death in her basement flat in Ellington Road, Ramsgate, on Monday night. The police believe the motive was robbery.

BBC pays damages for holiday criticism

Budget preview 3: Increased strain on the Inland Revenue

Tax-structure changes that would save staff

By Neville Hodgkinson
Social Policy Correspondent

Cosmos Air Holidays accepted "several thousand of pounds" in damages and costs yesterday in settlement of a High Court libel action against the BBC over a television programme which ridiculed a package holiday in Majorca.

Criticism about the holiday, which was accompanied by the theme music from the *Colditz* television series, Mr Justice McLean said, was "ridiculous". The company sued the BBC, Michael Bruce, who edited the 1975 programme, and Valerie Singleton and Richard Stilgoe, two reporters.

Mr Richard Hartley, QC, for Cosmos, said nearly half a million people travelled abroad each year through Cosmos.

The programme purported to show viewers against pitfalls in choosing an hotel and resort from a brochure. The *Colditz* summer brochure was given particular prominence.

One of the hotels selected for criticism and ridicule was the Torre Aranal at Aranal, Playa de Palma, Majorca.

The reporters made no complaint about the hotel's comfort or convenience, but were scathing about its location and amenities, which they said were completely different from the descriptions given. They said the hotel was situated in the centre of a slum clearance area where children might be run over or struck on the head by falling tiles.

Mr Hartley said Cosmos had prided itself on giving clients excellent value for money and for paying particular attention to the choice of hotels and resorts. Quite apart from the unfair criticisms of the hotel and its amenities the company particularly resented the inference that it was guilty of offences under the Trade Descriptions Act.

The defendants now accepted that their criticisms were unjustified and unfair and had agreed to pay appropriate damages and costs.

Mr John Previté, for the defendant, said they regretted that the unwarranted suggestions were ever made and apologized for the embarrassment caused.

The judge agreed to the record of the action being withdrawn.

Butchers are not profiteering, livestock chairman says

By Hugh Clayton

Allegations of profiteering by butchers were dismissed yesterday by Mr George Howard, chairman of the Meat and Livestock Commission. "Increases in retail prices are very much in line with the higher prices

that butchers have had to pay," he said in London.

"I dislike very much bearing one sector of the industry accuse the other of profiteering."

It was simply not true that butchers had made excess profits at the expense of livestock farmers. The price of

English lamb had risen by less than a fifth in a year, while the price of sheep had increased by half.

It is said that meat has become a luxury article. Taking the short term, meat prices have risen more slowly than those of other foods.

Mr Howard defended the export trade in meat and livestock while admitting that at first it might affect shop prices at home. Eventually it would create a wider market for British livestock and benefit farmers and consumers.

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PARLIAMENT, March 22, 1977

Normal service will be resumed pretty soon

House of Commons
Mr Callaghan, the Prime Minister, was accorded loud and prolonged Labour cheers at the beginning and end of his customary 15 minutes of question time during which he was cross-examined by Margaret Thatcher, Leader of the Opposition.

She was loudly cheered by Conservative MPs on whether he still stood by Labour's 1974 manifesto. At one stage Mr Callaghan commented he thought normal service would be resumed "pretty soon".

When the Prime Minister rose to answer his first question, the loud Labour cheers delayed the reply and smothered Conservative MPs' waves of order papers. The Labourers in the Chamber tried to persuade them, without success, to join in the cheers.

Mr James Callaghan (Cardiff, South-East, Lab) remarked—I was hoping that it might have been unanimous. (Laughter.)

Mr Peter Rost (South-East Derbyshire, C) had asked when the Prime Minister last made a ministerial broadcast.

Mr Callaghan referred him to a previous reply and Mr Rost said—Is the Prime Minister sure that he can hand his tonight's broadcast over to the Labourers? It will be picking the leader of another party to go along with him and hold his hand?

Mr Callaghan—I am grateful to Mr Rost for giving me the opportunity to intimate that I hope the whole House will watch the excellent

newscasters on the BBC. (Applause.)

Mr Margaret Thatcher, Leader of the Opposition (Barnet, Finchley, C) rose to Conservative cheers and a few shouts of "Resign" from Labour MPs.

She said—in his several broadcasts the Prime Minister, Mr Callaghan, has laid great stress on the Labour Party programme. Does he still stand by the Labour 1974 manifesto? (Conservative cheers.)

Mr Callaghan—I am grateful for the inquiry you have made. I am

glad to indicate to the House, as I recently had to review it, that I am glad to say that about four-fifths of the manifesto has already been carried out. (Applause.)

And I am confident that we shall be able to complete the rest with the assistance of all parts of the House.

Mrs Thatcher—Did the Labour Party, when they drew it up, consider a very short parliament?

Mr Callaghan—No. We knew the clarity with which Labour MPs would work and the desire of the Opposition to assist. Therefore, we were clear we would be able to get it done in a reasonable period of time.

I am very grateful to the Opposition for all the assistance they have given us. (Labour laughter.)

Mr Donald Stewart (Western Isles, Scott, Nat)—In the next broadcast by newscasters on the BBC, the Government will make clear to his party that the main

digginggers were the Labour MPs.

Mr James Callaghan—I am grateful to Mr Rost for giving me the opportunity to intimate that I hope the whole

House will watch the excellent

Criticism of Tory by-election poster

Mr Dennis Canavan (West Stirlingshire, Lab) accused the Conservatives of stirring up racism by "dirty fascist tactics" in the Stirlingshire by-election.

During questions to the Prime Minister about Mr Callaghan's statement with the TUC, he said—Will we discuss with the TUC the need for a united campaign against the kind of racism which is being stirred up by the dirty fascist tactics being used by the Tories who are using anti-trade-union posters similar to those used by the National Front with the apparent approval of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition? (Mr William Whitelaw.)

Mr James Callaghan—I read the account in *The Guardian* of the leaflet, or a facsimile of the leaflet, used by the Conservative candidate. It is certainly a variance with the views that have been expressed in this House on that matter.

Mr Dennis Skinner (Bolsover, Lab)—Not really. They have said that they would stop immigration. They have said they would place restrictions on it, as we have done. They have said they would need to examine carefully the question of a register, as we have done. I do not understand how a Conservative candidate is going to say that a particular register is going to be set up beyond official Conservative party policy.

It is very doubtful, or perhaps the Leader of the Opposition would take advantage of this opportunity to clear the position up. (Loud Labour shouts of "Answer".)

£10m credit facility available to Romania

House of Lords
The Export Credit Guarantee Department has decided in principle to make a special credit line of £10m available to the Romanians on special conditions, Lord Goring-Roberts, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs announced.

He said the Romanians would be able to use this to place orders with British companies to replace equipment damaged during the earthquake. It was in addition to the governmental and considerable private contributions from this country to the Romanian Government and people.

Earlier Lord Elton, an Opposition spokesman, had asked whether the Government had considered the use of an RAF aircraft to deliver a consignment of drugs available for dispatch to Bucharest on March 7 for the relief of earthquake victims.

He said it was, as reported in the press, that this method of delivery was reflected as too costly, and it so, how much time was lost and how much money was saved by the implementation of this decision? Lord Elton asked—Yes. The Government decided not to charter an RAF aircraft to deliver medical supplies to Romania on March 7 because British Airways and the Romanian state airline were able to take the available supplies on their flight to Bucharest on March 8 at free of charge.

The cost of a RAF aircraft would have been roughly £5,000.

He added that the 24-hour delay of first delivery had not affected the situation in Romania. The Government did not feel they should reject the suggestion made by the Romanian state airline. The savings of £5,000 would be available to add to the amount they were making in making to the Romanian authorities.

House adjourned, 8.54 pm.

Job release take-up slow

Lord Wallace of Costessey, Lord in Waiting, making the second reading of the Job Release Bill, which has passed the Commons, said so far had been less than the Government had hoped. Up to March 18 there had been about 12,000 applications of which about 10,000 had been approved. About 3,000 were from employed people and 7,000 from unemployed people.

More publicity was being given to job release in an effort to improve the take-up and particularly to those in all employment who were eligible were aware of the scheme.

The Bill was read a second time.

Passage of Bills
The Agriculture Holdings (Notices to Quit) Bill was read the third time and passed.

The Social Security (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill completed the report stage.

Defence cuts defended: £2,350m for equipment in coming year: announcement on short-service gratuities

Mr Frederick Mulley, Secretary of State for Defence (Sheffield, Park, Lab) opened the two-day defence debate.

"That this House takes note of the Statement on the Defence Estimates 1977 and endorses HM Government's policy of basing British forces on collective effort to deter aggression while seeking every opportunity to reduce tensions through international agreements on arms control and disarmament."

He said the Statement on the Defence Estimates reaffirmed the Government's determination to make a substantial defence contribution to Nato and deploy British forces when they could have done so unilaterally, often on a scale which would not be sustainable.

The Government's determination, in conjunction with their allies, to seek reductions in the level of armaments, nuclear and conventional, by international agreement.

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5 per cent
rise in
farm prices
urged

WEST EUROPE

Mr Jenkins faces censure motion for suspending EEC export subsidies on butter for E Europe

From David Cross
Luxembourg, March 22

Members of the European Parliament are to debate tomorrow a censure motion against Mr Roy Jenkins, the President of the European Commission, and his Commission colleagues for their recent handling of subsidized butter sales to the Soviet Union.

The motion, which has been tabled by the 47 French and Irish members of the European Progressive Democratic Group, criticizes the Commission for deciding to suspend export subsidies on butter sales to Eastern Europe. This move was not founded on any legal basis whatsoever and the Commission had consequently exceeded its powers, the motion alleges.

It also criticizes the Commission for having failed to consult the Parliament before acting and for its general mismanagement of stocks of agricultural products. "The Commission can be held personally responsible for the disastrous management of stocks", it says.

After a full-scale debate during which the Commission is expected to defend its decision to ban temporarily butter sales to Eastern Europe, the motion will be voted on by MPs. If there is a substantial majority in favour, Mr Jenkins and his colleagues would have to resign.

The interests of the pro-

ducer and the consumer came to the same thing, he said. "Putting food into store or selling it outside the Community with the benefit of vast subsidies helps neither of them", he added.

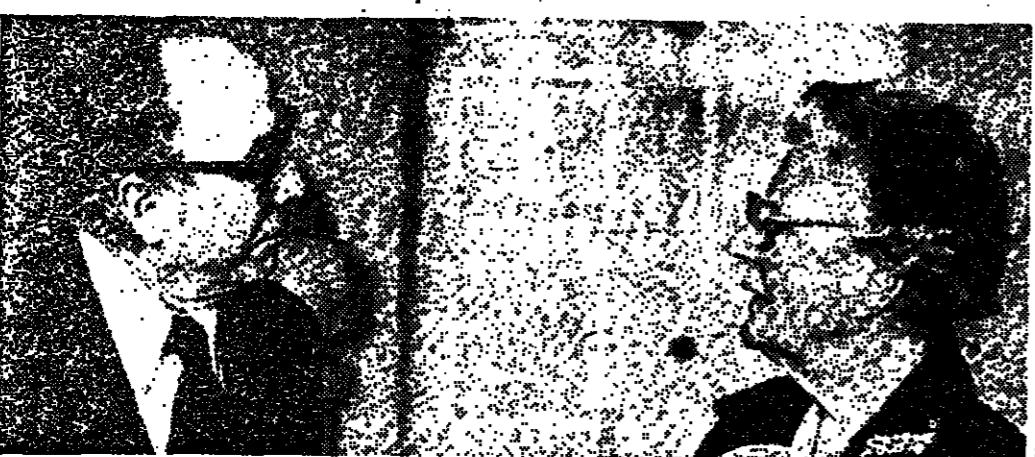
Mr Silkin, who is seeking a virtual standstill on EEC farm prices this year, said there were large changes on the horizon. "The Community should be turning its mind to Greece, Portugal and Spain because members of the EEC are seen as likely, the Community's agricultural policy would have to be transformed to take account of an entirely different situation."

The Assembly was debating a draft resolution drawn up by its agricultural committee calling for farm price increases averaging 5 per cent this year. However, the European Commission's recommendation for a 3 per cent rise across the board is supported by the Parliament's budgetary committee.

When the resolution is put to the vote tomorrow, it will have an important bearing on the deliberations of ministers of agriculture of the Nine who are due to complete their price negotiations in Brussels this weekend.

With the exception of the British, most other EEC governments are calling for rises of more than 3 per cent.

Parliamentary report, page 6



Mr Roy Jenkins with Queen Juliana at Soestdijk palace yesterday.

Dutch want delegate of Nine at summit

From Our Correspondent
The Hague, March 22

Mr Roy Jenkins, the President of the European Commission, ended a two-day visit to The Hague today after an audience with Queen Juliana.

In a statement he noted with satisfaction the Dutch Government's support for his position that the EEC as a whole should be represented at the forthcoming Western economic summit in London.

France is the main opponent of this standpoint, arguing that since no decisions will be taken in London it is sufficient for France, Britain and West

Germany to represent the Community, and that the presence of Mr Jenkins and representatives of the smaller EEC countries is not required.

Mr Jenkins said he and Mr Joop den Uyl, the Dutch Prime Minister, shared the view that the EEC should be represented in London by the British Foreign Minister, in his capacity of chairman of the Council of Ministers, and by himself as President of the European Commission.

Mr Jenkins added that the final decision would have to be taken at the end of the week in Rome, where Europe's

has ever threatened to withdraw some of Holland's extra contributions to Community funds if the small countries are excluded from the summit.

Mr Jenkins preferred not to talk about possible reprisals, but confirmed that "we see entirely eye to eye with the Dutch on this issue".

Andreotti plea for prudence as Rome strikes

From Our Own Correspondent
Rome, March 22

Signor Andreotti, the hard-pressed Prime Minister of Italy, expressed the hope today that in the present difficult situation no one was making the mistake of thinking in terms of a trial of strength between the Government and the trade unions.

He emphasized the need for prudence in an interview which was published on the eve of a general strike in Rome and the whole Lazio region. Industry, agriculture, schools, and public offices are due to be idle all day tomorrow. Cinemas and theatres will close and public transport will stop for several hours.

Shopkeepers have decided to close their businesses in a separate protest against the growing number of violent attacks on them in the city.

The Prime Minister's main point in his interview was that the life expectancy of his Government was of only relative importance. What counted, he said, was that the trend providing a minimum of convergence among the democratic parties should not be broken without there being first the certainty of something better to follow.

This idea of prudence marked Signor Andreotti's talks today aimed at winning the support of the Patriotic parties, which help to keep his minority administration afloat, to reduce labour costs.

Mrs Hart resumes battle with French over aid

From Michael Hornsby
Brussels, March 22

Mrs Judith Hart, the Minister for Overseas Development and among the most unreceptive of British anti-Marketiers, returned to the European stage today after a break of two years to take the chair at a meeting of EEC ministers responsible for aid to developing countries.

She quickly found herself in a tussle with the French who were opposing a Commission proposal which would establish a permanent legal basis for aid to countries in Asia, among them Malaysia, India, Pakistan and Ceylon, and in Latin America which are not associated with the EEC in any formal

agreement.

This has always been a matter

of concern to Britain, who was given assurances on accession that attention would be given to bringing Asian Commonwealth countries within the web of the Community's trade and aid agreements with developing countries.

As in the past, the French today opposed putting aid to the non-associated states on a permanent footing, insisting it should be decided each year.

In the 1977 budget, the Commission, backed by the European Parliament, has proposed expenditure of 45 million units of account (£18.7m), but this was to be coupled with agreement on a framework for such aid. Now it appears that this part of the proposals at least will have to be dropped.

Nine in accord on VAT

From Our Own Correspondent
Brussels, March 22

Finance and budget ministers of the Nine were tonight described as "home and dry" in their search for agreement on the question of which items should be subject to or exempt from value added tax (VAT) for the purpose of calculating payments to the EEC budget.

One or two minor reservations remained. Speaking at a press conference after tonight's meeting, Mr Robert Sheldon, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, who was in the chair, said that a list of goods and services throughout the Community.

the introduction of "own resources" would enable member governments to finance EEC activities automatically without the present recourse to direct contributions from national exchequers.

It is intended that from the beginning of 1978 onwards these direct contributions should be replaced by revenue equivalent to up to 10 per cent of VAT levied on an agreed list of goods and services throughout the municipal incinerator.

Gimmicks will not save French Government

From Charles Hargrove
Paris, March 22

A minister is quoted by one of the Paris dailies this morning as saying that the Government's preoccupation is to discover a gimmick which will bring back to the fold the 2 per cent of the popular vote that deserted it for the left in the municipal elections. But a gimmick will not be enough.

Sacrificing the seven ministers who were beaten at the polls would not be convincing, although tomorrow's Cabinet meeting may produce a reshuffle, which many observers consider inevitable, to demonstrate the Government's determination to make a fresh start, with an eye on next year's Parliamentary elections.

What the government majority needs is a common programme and strategy of its own, to match the undeniable power of attraction which the common programme of the left has had on a large

number of voters in the shifting middle ground of the electorate. That is the recipe of M. Jacques Chirac, the leader of the Gaullist Rassemblement, and the elected mayor of Paris. "We must alter our tactics, clearly out the enemy more clearly and fight the same kind of battle as he fights against us", he said yesterday.

For a start, in the Gaullists' way of thinking, their Giscardian and Centrist partners must acknowledge the error of their ways and abandon their persistent attempts, since President Giscard d'Estaing's election nearly three years ago, to undermine the dominant position of the Gaullists in the government majority. The most recent attempt was to put up M. Michel Ornano, the Minister of Industry and a close friend of the President, as a candidate for the post of mayor of Paris.

The Gaullists believe that they have been clearly, if not

Basques freed under wider amnesty

From William Chislett
Madrid, March 22

To shouts of "Gora Euskadi" (Long live the Basque country) three alleged members of the Basque separatist organization ETA were today released from Carabanchel prison here.

They were among the first political prisoners to benefit from the Government's widening of its amnesty which came into effect last weekend and is expected to cover most of the estimated 178 remaining political prisoners, nearly all of them Basques.

A small crowd of about 30 people, family and friends had been waiting all night outside the old grim prison in a working-class suburb of Madrid. The three released were Señor José Korbarria, Señor Gonzalo Osuna and Señor Pablo Gabikagorria, Gayetze. The first two were arrested on November 4, 1975 in Oñate in the Basque country and were accused of illegal association and possessing arms.

Señor Gayetze was arrested in Madrid on September 18, 1975 during a nationwide police raid against ETA. No formal charges were brought against him and his arrest was in connection with a wave of attacks.

Ironically the three prisoners were released on the seventeenth anniversary of the death in 1936 of Señor José Antonio de Aguirre, the President of the autonomous Basque Government.

Meanwhile families of other political prisoners gathered outside various prisons in Spain awaiting news of their king. The amnesty is not expected to cover those directly involved in politically motivated crimes of violence, although this is not completely clear yet. To date about nine political prisoners have been released.

Unconfirmed reports are increasing that the Spanish Communist Party will be legalized by the Supreme Court by the end of this week. The court must give its verdict by April 1. Officials at the party's headquarters are reluctant to commit themselves either way on the issue of legalization, but there is a definite feeling that it is a foregone conclusion.

As the Government has now

announced its electoral law—although the exact text has yet to be published—observers believe that it is anxious to solve the Communist problem as soon as possible and so open the way for electoral campaigning without discrimination. Most parties, particularly the neo-Franco Popular Alliance, have already started their campaign but the Communists are still having their meetings banned.

Press-button efficiency has spread right through the business world.

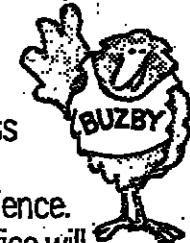
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OVERSEAS

Carter plan proposes sweeping changes in US electoral laws

From Patrick Brogan
Washington, March 22
The American Government today announced proposals for a reform of the electoral laws. These would make registration to vote far easier, would abolish the electoral college system and provide for financing congressional elections out of public funds.

In a message to Congress, prepared with the assistance of congressional leaders, President Carter also recommends simplification of the existing laws on the public financing of presidential elections and an amendment to the Hatch Act, which now forbids civil servants from taking part in politics.

The most important of these reforms, and the one which will be most difficult to get through Congress, is the proposal that the Government should pay for the elections of senators and representatives. Paying for presidential elections this way was the most important reform resulting from the Watergate affair, but congressmen succeeded in preventing any such reform of their own elections. The present system is enormously favourable to incumbents, who find it far easier to raise money to defend their seats than unknown rivals do to challenge them.

The same coalition which defeated reform two years ago will be mustered again this time. President Ford, a former congressman himself, did not support the proposal and the addition of the weight of the presidency to the reform movement will undoubtedly help the cause.

Proposals to reform the system of presidential election have been common since the earliest days of the republic. Under the constitution, voters choose electors who in turn vote for the President. The idea was

that the wisest would be chosen to select the best man for the presidency, but in fact the system never worked, even in the days of George Washington.

On three occasions in the nineteenth century the candidate with most popular votes was defeated by a rival who accumulated more electoral votes, and the same result has been narrowly avoided several times recently—including last November. If Mr Ford had carried Ohio and Hawaii, and he was only about 12,000 votes short of doing so, he would have won the election and would still be President, even though Mr Carter won nearly two million votes more than he did.

This is because the candidate with the most popular votes in a particular state takes every electoral college vote there. The constitution deliberately gives a considerable advantage to states with small populations (states get one electoral vote for every senator and congressman, which gives Alaska three votes for 83,000 voters, and California 45 for 30 million).

Now Mr Carter proposes that future presidents should be elected directly, and without any weighting towards small states. This will need a constitutional amendment. It should get the two-thirds majority needed in both houses, and two thirds of the states needed for ratification, but the process will obviously be protracted.

The President has submitted a Bill to Congress which would allow voters to register, if necessary, at the polling booths. This is a system working in four states, where voter turnout ranges between 65 and 77 per cent, compared with a national average of about 55 per cent.

Deposed leader 'admits Congo coup attempt'

Yaoundé, Cameroun, March 22—Mr Alphonse Massamba-Debat, the former Congolese President, had admitted involvement in the assassination last Friday of Major Marien Ngouabi, the head of state. Brazzaville Radio, monitored here, reported.

A communiqué from the provisional military committee ruling Congo since the killing, said that Mr Massamba-Debat, who was overthrown by the army in 1968, had formed a government in advance and already selected a new army chief of staff.

Mr Vorster in new talks on press bill

From Our Correspondent
Cape Town, March 22

Leaders of the South African newspaper industry met Mr Vorster, the Prime Minister, for discussions on the News Bill again today. They agreed to continue the talks tomorrow.

The Newspaper Bill, due for its second reading in the House of Assembly on Thursday, provides for a state-drafted code of conduct and a largely state-appointed press council with powers to fine journalists and close newspapers for unspecific periods.

ADVERTISEMENT

Moscow, 13th March, 1977

Dear People of Goodwill,

"We appeal to you at one of the major points in the history of the Jews of Russia. During the last few months we have seen an escalation in the growing stream of harassments against Jews, beatings up, suppression of our culture, mass arrests, intimidation in all provincial towns, and all around us we can hear murmurs of this anti-Jewish feeling in newspapers and television, streets, shops, buses, metro and in the schools where our children are pupils.

On March 4th the official Soviet newspaper IZVESTIA published an article alleging that leaders of Soviet Jewry had committed 'treason'—the ultimate in trumped-up charges. On that same day the signatories' homes were ransacked: every personal paper was confiscated. Please write to us as we now no longer have the addresses of our friends.

Today every Jew in the Soviet Union is a potential victim. In this dangerous moment in our lives we want you to know that no treachery, no threats, no slander, no libel can intimidate us. We shall do everything in our power to restore and maintain the honour and dignity of our people."

Signed:

Iosif Beilin, Bolshaya Cherkisovskaya 6/4, Apt. 53, Moscow.

Anatoly Sharansky, Moskovskaya Oblast Istra, Ko-operativnaya ul. 8,

Apt. 4, Moscow.

Mikhail Kremen, ul. Molostovikh 11/2, Apt. 64, Moscow.

Boris Chernobilsky, Uralskaya 6/3, Apt. 25, Moscow.

Vladimir Slepak, ul. Gorkogo 15, Apt. 77.

Ida Nudel, ul. Yunikh Lenintsev 79/6, Apt. 28, Moscow.

Alexander Lerner, ul. Dmitrii Ulyanova 4/2, Apt. 322, Moscow.

Plus 243 others.

The above are extracts from two letters telephoned from Moscow on Sunday, March 13th 1977.

Cable received 15.3.77

GREATEST FEARS REALISED STOP SHARANSKY ARRESTED STOP NOW AT LEFORTOVO PRISON MOSCOW STOP FAMILY INFORMED KGB INVESTIGATING SHARANSKY FOR CRIMES AGAINST STATE STOP HELP PLEASE!

Published by the WILSIKI WATCHDOG COMMITTEE, 148 Granville Road, London N.W.2. Tel: 01-458 7147

About-turn in Moscow opinion of Mrs Gandhi

Moscow, March 22—The Soviet Government newspaper IZVESTIA today attributed Mrs Gandhi's election defeat to "mistakes and excesses" committed after the introduction of the state of emergency in India two years ago.

In a report from Delhi it also blamed the Congress Party for what it called refusal to cooperate in most Indian states in the public financing of presidential elections and an amendment to the Hatch Act, which now forbids civil servants from taking part in politics.

The most important of these reforms, and the one which will be most difficult to get through Congress, is the proposal that the Government should pay for the elections of senators and representatives. Paying for presidential elections this way was the most important reform resulting from the Watergate affair, but congressmen succeeded in preventing any such reform of their own elections. The present system is enormously favourable to incumbents, who find it far easier to raise money to defend their seats than unknown rivals do to challenge them.

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Proposals to reform the system of presidential election have been common since the earliest days of the republic. Under the constitution, voters choose electors who in turn vote for the President. The idea was



A sad smile from Mrs Gandhi as she arrived for a Congress Party meeting yesterday.

Gandhi comeback forecast

Continued from page 1

the break with the Nehru family—even in Delhi where the people elected only Janata candidates. There is anxiety about what kind of government in India, were to return to India.

Knowelpedia All newspapers in

Pakistan carried the news with bold headlines.

The non-aligned movement and possibly Yugoslavia's international tactics, could be profoundly modified if American influence, already established in Egypt, were to return to India.

Knowelpedia All newspapers in

Pakistan carried the news with bold headlines.

The widely read *Jang* said the people of India had demonstrated a preference for democratic values and a rejection of personality. What had damaged Mrs Gandhi most was her recourse to emergency powers to curb civil liberties and the voice of dissent.

Colombia Mrs Bandaranaike,

the Sri Lankan Prime Minister,

would make no comment on

the downfall of Mrs Gandhi, for whom she has expressed admiration in the past.

Reuters, AP and Agence

France-Presse.

with its Congress for Democracy ally, 293 seats in the new 542 Lok Sabha (Lower House) with the Indian people must be respected, she declared. "My colleagues and I accept their verdict unreservedly, and in a spirit of humility."

The departure from office of Mrs Gandhi raised insistently today the question of what had gone so disastrously wrong in that relationship with the Indian people which she inherited from her father and remained for herself alone in the so-called "Indira wave" election of 1971. The facts were unavoidable. As a final, cruel blow today, the returns from the Congress bastion state of Uttar Pradesh came in, showing all 85 seats had gone to Janata.

In one word, what had gone wrong was the emergency. The emergency meant the arrogance, brutality and corruption of officials and police. Not only did it debauch India's love of democracy, but rampant favouritism bankrupted Mrs Gandhi's socialist pretensions.

By this afternoon the Janata (People's) Party had secured

and counsel on fighting terrorism.

The report added that the Israeli was faced at their breakfast tables with the riddle of what the actor Haim Topol was doing in Ecuador in company with "Gandhi".

A front-page report in the independent daily *Haaretz* claimed that Mr Topol had arrived in Quito with his friend Major-General Rehavam Zeevi and two other unnamed Israelis and that they had offered to supply the Ecuador Government with "sophisticated equipment and advisory services on war against internal and other terrorist activities".

This had been disclosed, it said, in a report to Jerusalem by Mr Sima Rom, the Israeli ambassador. General Zeevi, popularly known as "Gandhi" in Israel because of a youthful addiction to the Dhoti, was until recently adviser to the Israeli Prime Minister on counter-terrorism.

The Prime Minister's office confirmed that it had received a report that General Zeevi, Mr Topol and their friends had arrived in Ecuador without the embassy's knowledge and had told an Ecuador minister they were owners of a private company for supplying equipment

to the Israeli Government was recently rebuffed in its attempt to sell 24 of its home-made Kir

interceptor aircraft to Ecuador. The United States Government vetoed the deal on the ground that it re-exported American technology to a country which the United States does not wish to have supplied with advanced weapons. Israel is seeking alternative markets for the Kir.

Drought action in China

Hongkong, March 22—Millions of people have been mobilized to overcome the effects of serious drought in China, provincial radio stations disclosed last night—Agence France-Presse.

£9m for Jordan

Annan, March 22—Britain will grant Jordan a £9m credit under an agreement signed here. It will be used towards financing several projects in the Jordanian five-year plan ending in 1980.

Among the signatories were

Critical test over South Africa

From Peter Strafford
New York, March 22

The Security Council began a debate last night which is regarded as a critical test of the new American policies towards Africa. The subject was South Africa, and the African countries made it clear that they would be pressing for a

shift in the position the Americans have taken at the United Nations in the past.

Mr Leslie Harriman, the Nigerian representative, who is chairman of the African group at the United Nations, called on the United States, Britain and France not to repeat the vetoes which, he said, had protracted the grave situation in South Africa.

All the ingredients which were needed for change in Southern Africa were there, Mr Harriman said. "Those who have helped and continue to assist the liberation process in Africa are automatically friends of Africa. The corollary is also valid. Those who do not are not."

Exactly what the Africans will demand is still not clear. Mr Harriman spoke of the such a measure as the first step towards economic sanctions, which it considers it cannot afford, while France sells weapons to South Africa.

Mr Young is the present chairman of the Security Council. At the debate opened, several speakers spoke of the attitude that he and President Carter had adopted towards Africa, and one of them addressed him as "brother". But these eulogies were followed by stiff demands for western support.

A point on which last night's speakers laid particular emphasis was investment by western countries in South Africa, and the need to end it. Mr Harriman said that western investment was being used to build up the South African armed forces, because of the imbalance in the South African budget.

The western community, he said, was becoming more and more involved in the destiny of South Africa. For instance

Independent Djibouti keeps French troops

From Paul Martin
Paris, March 22

imperialism nor Zionism can get control of this region."

Meeting in the large town of Taizé, 120 miles south of Djibouti, were Mr Gaafar Nimeiri, President of Sudan, Mr Robaye Ali, General Muhammed Siad Barre, the Somali leader, and Mr Ibrahim Albaum, the head of state.

There was no explanation of an announcement in Sanaa earlier today that General Siad Barre would not be taking part.

The talks, between the French Government and representatives of the Territory of Afars and Issas, resulted in an agreement to hold legislative elections in May, to be followed by the independence proclamation a month later. The future of the territory and the role France will play have been of great concern to pro-Western forces in the area—foremost among them Saudi Arabia, which fears the spread of Soviet influence.

During President Giscard d'Estaing's state visit to Saudi Arabia earlier this year France's intentions in Djibouti were closely questioned by the Saudi leaders. The French President was then understood to have given an assurance that France would work for a smooth transition in Djibouti but would not abandon its military "obligations" in the territory.

Taizé, North Yemen, March 22—Four Red Sea heads of state opened discussions here today with the aim of ensuring peace in the Red Sea area.

President Salem Robaye Ali of South Yemen, told the press: "We must make the Red Sea into a region of peace. The states bordering on the Red Sea are anxious to preserve security so that neither

Agence France-Presse.

Lone anti-royalist unable to catch Queen's eye

Adelaide, March 22—A demonstrator staged a one-man republican protest here today during a function attended by the Queen. Waving a flag and shouting anti-royalist slogans, the Queen ignored him, and the Duke of Edinburgh smiled.

Mr Don Dunstan, the South Australian state Premier, who was making a speech, glanced briefly at the demonstrator. The Queen ignored him, and the Duke of Edinburgh smiled.

Before the Queen arrived to open part of the Adelaide Festival Centre, a larger demonstration took place involving about fifty people. They were protesting that a sculpture designed by a West German, which is on permanent display at the centre, should have been the work of a local artist. The protest did not affect the official ceremony.

At the opening, the Queen made the only official address of her Adelaide tour, noting the impressive growth of the city since her last visit 14 years ago. She later attended a state reception in the Festival Theatre. She and her husband are due

to leave for Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea tomorrow.

Secretary says: Mr Gough Whitlam, the former Labour Prime Minister, told a state court in Sydney that he had never investigated press reports of a romantic attachment between his deputy, Dr Jim Cairns, and Mrs June Morosi, Dr Cairns's secretary.

Mr Whitlam, now leader of the Opposition, since his dismissal by the Governor-General, was giving evidence in a defamation action brought by Miss Morosi, aged 43. She is claiming £10,000 damages for loss of her efficiency.

Mr Whitlam said: "Because of her efficiency", Mr Whitlam said. But he admitted that the political scandal which arose over his appointment had damaged his Government.

Mr Whitlam denied ever ordering Dr Cairns to dismiss Miss Morosi—Reuter.

Argentine group's appeal for freeing of detainees

From Our Correspondent
Buenos Aires, March 22

three Roman Catholic bishops, a Methodist bishop and two former senators.

The Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, a group of prominent citizens established last December, is chiefly concerned with attempting to trace the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people who have disappeared during the past year after being abducted from their homes or in the streets by groups of armed men identifying themselves as members of the armed forces.

Some members of the group claim that many thousands of Argentines have disappeared in this way, but so far they say they have lists of only 600 fully documented cases.

The group employs some 15 lawyers to try to trace what it calls *los desaparecidos* (the disappeared ones) through petitions to military and government authorities. *Habeas corpus* pleadings have been published in some Buenos Aires newspapers, but according to informed sources, the newspapers concerned have now been told by the Government to stop publishing the lists, and they have stopped appearing during the past week.

At the military coup a year

SPORT

Football

All that does not glister is golden to Rangers

By Norman Fox

Football Correspondent

0-0 Rangers 0 Manchester C 0

With Dave Sexton, the Queen's Park Rangers manager last night called an "uphill battle" ending with a "golden" point at Lotus Road, helping his team climb away from the relegation zone, was something of a statistic, and again glided to the uncommunicative Manchester City in need of both points to keep them in touch with the championship leaders, also seemed surprisingly satisfied, even though they had probably half a dozen chances.

The fixture had been devalued by recent performances by both teams and the number of aberrations, mostly on Rangers' side, without Bowles and Francis in, were varied and unpredictable. Mcintosh, to score, the defence was acceptably poor. City, who had lost four of their last six games, and with them possibly the chance of catching Liverpool, were without Doyle in the centre of defence. Rangers had lost both Kidd with a thigh strain after 15 minutes.

With such omens to overcome the game started in ill-favour of the ensuing evidence proved the atmosphere, often dominant only on Tuxart and Barnes, both playing wide, and Kidd, in a midfield position, did show confidence, but, although in the second half Barnes also impressed with his furnishing runs down the line.



Masson (left) kicks a shot from Kidd (extreme right) off the line.

found himself working without the support, or, apparently, the interest of midfield players who failed to explore beyond the halfway line. Kidd continued to soldier, otherwise detached City moves, but the chances of the ball, and with them all the direct results of mistakes.

Kidd cleared a header from Bowles off the line and in the second half Tuxart was twice offered opportunities to secure an undeserved win. Barnes, naturally provided the first chance when he made yards of space on the wing, and he was immediately in front of goal. A short header from a couple of bounces bounded in front of Parkes, who fell on the ball.

Parke again saved Rangers, but this time unwittingly, when Tuxart found himself unmarked in front of goal and vollied a short shot.

Parke was going the wrong way, but the ball rebounded off his

Mistakes flowed unabated, and if it had not been for the sad

fact that five of the England party

with Luxembourg were involved,

there might have been cause for

alarm, but the ball fell flat.

It might reasonably have

been thought that was a fiasco that could only happen once. It was

only the beginning. Poor Barnes

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Why the political parties should spell out their policies for television



This week's column is by Grace Wyndham Goldie, former Head of BBC Television Talks and Current Affairs, and author of *Facing the Nation: Television and Politics, 1936-1976*, published last week.

In every country in the world, television is conditioned by political decision: governments everywhere are influenced (in what is not yet measurable) by the impression political leaders make upon television viewers. This interdependence is rooted in the technology of the medium. Because television makes it possible for political leaders to communicate, in vision, personally and directly with millions of individuals watching simultaneously in their homes, politicians are bound to make use of it. In dictatorships they also try to prevent opponents and dissidents having access to it.

This happens even in democracies. I remember, when dining in General de Gaulle's France with an official of the United Nations, being asked whether I would mind having the television set turned on. It was time for the news. I said: "Of course not. But we'll only hear what the Government wants," said. My host answered: "That's why I have to see it. It's the best indication we have of what's in de Gaulle's mind."

In Italy, the television staff, down to the office boy, seemed to be changed whenever there was a change of government. In the United States, access to television by politicians is considered so important that it is meticulously regulated. In Britain, access, as I well know after having spent a lifetime in television production—particularly in the area of politics and current affairs—is a subject of constant dispute between the political parties and, in consequence, of constant political pressure upon broadcasters.

Can Jews in Britain continue to preserve their identity?

The Jewish community, always prone to introspection, has again been taking its own temperature. Last week, sociologists, historians and religious leaders met in London to discuss at length and in depth the subject of "Jewish Life in Modern Britain". It was the second such conference, the first having taken place 15 years ago.

One of the major obstacles in the way of basic data is the dearth of reliable data. The national census makes no reference to religion, so that even the Jewish population of Britain is not accurately known and has had to be estimated. The last such estimate was 410,000 for the period 1960-65 and was calculated on what is claimed to be a reliable statistical method based on a count of Jewish deaths.

The assumption is that, wherever else in Judaism they may abandon all Jews eventually undergo Jewish burials. The number of these is precisely known and, by relating this figure to national statistics, a reasonably accurate estimate of population can be deduced.

The 1960-65 figure was lower than the previously accepted estimate of 450,000 and it is probable that the 1977 figure, when it comes to be calculated, will be lower still because of losses through assimilation and emigration. These losses are not now being replaced by any significant Jewish immigration.

Some evidence in support of this assumption is provided by the figures available for synagogue marriages (they are accurately recorded) which have declined from a high of almost 3,000 annually between 1941 and 1950 to a low of 1,750 between 1971 and 1975. Some of this difference must be attributable to marriages with non-Jewish partners which would be performed either at a Christian or a civil ceremony. When there is intermarriage without conversion, it is generally assumed that, even if the Jewish spouse remains a member of the Jewish community, the children of the marriage are unlikely to be Jewish.

The consequences of intermarriage in this increasingly open, tolerant and religiously indifferent society are always on the agenda in discussions of Jewish identity and survival and this conference was no exception. Professor S. J. Prais quoted from studies made in the United States that intermarriage was low among those born abroad and also among their children. But, "it is amongst the grand-

children of immigrants that the proportion intermarrying rises sharply", he reported, and added that "something similar may be happening here".

One of the participants in the conference had the temerity to suggest to the sociologists and sociologists that they were obsessed by numbers and that it was the quality of Jewish life which ought to be investigated. That comment ignored the fact that the decrease in the number of synagogue marriages was itself a reflection of a general decline of Jewish cohesiveness—at least among the broad centre. It was evident from much of the discussion that, since the last conference, the "more or less unaffiliated section" had grown so that Professor Prais observed that it "can no longer be regarded as mere fringe".

The reverse side of the coin of communal debility is the equally evident phenomenon of the integration of British Jews in the changing social structure. Another sociologist, Professor Ernst Krausz, pointed out that, while a historically dominant culture persists in Britain, nationally dominant relationships are becoming increasingly accepted as more recently established groups become accepted as integral sections of our society. We are, he argued, moving towards an acceptance (already the case in the USA) of cultural pluralism. Jews therefore no longer think of themselves as a disadvantaged minority and, in consequence, there is today a greater disposition to assert Jewish identity and associations and, conversely, few inhibitions among those who want to opt out of Judaism altogether.

For the majority of Jews in Britain, Professor Krausz says, "acculturation seems to be the order of the day". By acculturation, he means being part of British social and cultural life while preserving Jewish identity. Assimilation on the other hand, which amounts to total absorption in the dominant society, would lead to the dissolution of the Jewish community. Acculturation could lead to assimilation, but not necessarily so.

In fact, this does not appear to be happening in Britain and, despite the increasing secularisation of society, the Jewish community maintains a wide range of well-organized institutions catering to the special Jewish interests, religious and social, of its members. But there were many at the conference who asserted that

the organizational structure of British Jewry was offering too little to allay apprehensions of not just a seepage from Judaism but a massive haemorrhage.

Among those who share this fear is a body of devout "ethnocentric" Jews in Britain who, to avoid a dilution of their commitment, eschew acculturation and live together in a totally Jewish environment. But, while it has shown some growth in recent years, this group still constitutes a numerically small proportion of the total Jewish population. For the majority of Jews in this country, belief in the Jewish faith and the practice of its observances has given way (in the words of "Professor Krausz") to a kind of "emasculated" Jewish identity—believe by association".

In contrast to the generally sober, if not depressing, assessments of the sociologists, Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits was resolutely optimistic. "While drift and apathy continue to be widespread", nevertheless "collectively and organizationally the community . . . remains predominantly orthodox and, in a religious sense, Anglo-Jewry is still the most stable community in the world". He was, however, slightly perturbed by the intermarriage rate, believing that the peak had now passed and doubting if it now exceeded 20 per cent.

But even Rabbi Jakobovits concurred with the general forecasts of numerical decline. He believed that the Jewish community in Britain would be reduced to "a mere 300,000 in the next generation" but drew the hopeful conclusion that "the religious fittest will be the main element to survive as Jews; the community . . . will probably gain in intensity what it loses in numbers".

It is always perplexing to try to present some reasonably accurate prognosis of the health of the Jewish community. Prophets of decline and dissolution have logic on their side, but there is an illogical element in Jewish survival. Yet, historically, Judaism persisted either negatively because of persecution or positively through the strength of religious conviction. It remains to be tested whether being "Jewish by association" is a transmissible form of commitment.

William Frankel



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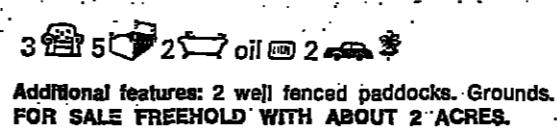


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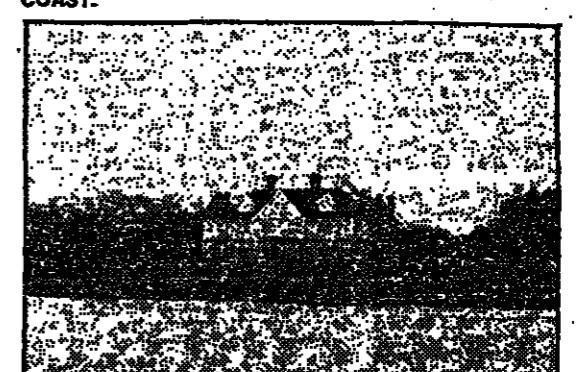


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Between Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge with panoramic eastern views. A TUDOR STYLE CHARACTER RESIDENCE detached and in immaculate condition with views over farmland and convenient for main line station to London. Entrance hall, cloakroom, 2 reception rooms, kitchen, 5 bedrooms, bath and shower rooms. Oil central heating. Integral garage and good range of stabling. Pleasant garden and five paddocks. In all about 8½ acres. Offers in excess of £47,000. T.C.2520 Joint Sole Agents: BERNARD THORPE & PARTNERS: HEAD OFFICE as below, or MARTIN & STRATFORD, 70 High Street, Alton, Hants. Tel.: Alton 84402.

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Situated in an area of great scenic beauty which enjoys unparalleled views over Loch Linnhe.

MOST ATTRACTIVE STONE BUILT FAMILY HOME, fully modernised and well maintained.

Lounge, dining room, kitchen with utility room, cloakroom, 4 double bedrooms, one with bathroom en-suite, second bathroom. Central heating.

2½ acres. Large double garage.

Offers over £29,500.

GLENCOE OFFICE: 37 Bath Street, Glasgow G1 1HW. Tel.: 041-332 7344.

Price £28,000 for quick sale.

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SCOTLAND—AYRSHIRE

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PROPERTIES also on pages 12 and 13

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Prime location. Change your life with this splendid 1923 built house. 2 reception, 2 double bedrooms, 2 single, 2 bath, plus plus, separate shower room. Garden. £17,800.

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Detached 4 Bedroom Bungalow, range of Buildings and approx. 1/2 Acre of the

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Simplifying the way revenue is collected from us all

The Times blueprint for radical tax reform

There is now general agreement, including agreement between the main political parties, that the structure and principles of our system of income tax are in need of radical reform. The main areas of criticism are the following:

First, marginal rates of taxation are so high over such a wide range of incomes that they are a major deterrent on the economy. This is clearest at the top end of the incomes scale where, in combination with the investment income surcharge, the marginal rate of tax can reach 98 per cent.

The "incentive" is equally draconian at the bottom end of the income scale where, in combination with means tested social security benefits, equally high effective marginal rates are increasingly common. At both ends of the scale this situation is bringing the income tax system into increasing disrepute and encouraging evasion on a wide scale.

For the broad majority of income tax payers, also, the high threshold of the system, with the marginal rate for the first pound of taxable income set at 35 per cent, and the steep steps by which the marginal rate on earned income rises from 35 per cent to 33 per cent have two undesirable consequences.

First, there is a deadweight loss of the yield from income tax come from those paying at the basic rate, so that the system as a whole is highly inefficient. And, at a psychological level, it makes people feel that they are being taxed at a much higher level than is, on average, the case. Thus, while the average British taxpayer is paying less total tax as a proportion of his income than his counterpart in most other industrial countries, he is paying a much higher marginal rate, with all the disincentive that implies.

Secondly, the system is so complicated that most tax payers are unable to understand it. The majority of those whose entire income is not within the PAYE system seem

Income tax allowances and reliefs

| | Nos benefiting | Revenue forgone (1977 £m) |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Mortgage interest | 4 million | 100 |
| Life assurance | 12 million | 235 |
| Services of daughter | 1 | 3 |
| Dependent relative | 1 | 35 |
| Housekeeper | 50,000 | 13 |
| Additional personal | 500,000 | 40 |
| Age | 500,000 | 225 |
| Wife's earned income | 6 million | 1500 |
| Child | 14 million | 1310 |
| Blind persons | 30,000 | 13 |

Notes: Revenue forgone has been measured by estimating the additional yield that would be received if each individual allowance had been withdrawn without any change in any other allowance. The figures for age allowances assume that those entitled could continue to receive single and married personal allowances.

Investment income surcharge

| Nos paying | Yield | 1974/5 | 1975/6 | 1976/7 |
|------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| 600,000 | £185m | 205 | 275 | |

Source: Inland Revenue estimates.

incomes between £5,000 and £30,000 a year.

Since even this would fall far short of tackling the basic faults of the income tax system, it is clear that fundamental reform can only be achieved over several years.

The ritual of the annual occasion positively encourages a Chancellor to experiment with the system as a whole in ways which accord with his political and social prejudices, or the supposed interests of his particular political constituents.

This process has led many to despair of the possibility of constructing a sustainable tax system. In order to meet this problem, The Times offers here a coordinated programme for the reform of the income tax system.

Reliefs and allowances:

The overriding consideration should be the need to simplify the system. The aim should be to reach the point where, as in the United States, the

majority of tax payers can assess their own tax liability.

As the table shows, the tax system has increasingly been used over the year for "social" purposes, for example with children's or blind persons' allowances.

This has not proved to be a particularly effective way of meeting these problems and the various special allowances substantially complicate the tax system. The current phased switch from allowance against tax to tax credits against tax should be taken as the model for phasing out other allowances in such a way that the majority of those receiving the concession are no worse off.

Mortgage interest and life assurance premium relief:

The proposal that life premiums should be paid by the individual not tax from 1978 should be extended to mortgage interest payments. The investment income surcharge should be abolished as having

no social or economic justification.

The combination of these reforms would enable an individual, armed with tax tables, to enter them with his or her gross income for the year and read from them the tax liability incurred. There is no reason why the overwhelming majority of taxpayers could not be accommodated within such a simplified system. The computation of the tax tables would include the personal tax allowance. There could be one table each year for single persons and another for married couples with only one income. The personal allowance and tax rates of the system should be adjusted annually to reflect the impact of inflation.

The "poverty trap":

Since the problem arises from the fact that the level of supplementary benefits judged to be the minimum that is acceptable can in an increasing number of families total more than the personal allowance against tax, the solution can only lie in increasing the relative value of the personal allowance.

The proper relationship could not be restored in one year, or even two. The immediate requirement is that it should not be allowed to become even worse. The policy for the programme should be that changes in income tax thresholds and social security benefits should be so coordinated over the next five years that by the end of the period some differential has been re-established.

Since taxation has to do with the distribution of income, which goes to the heart of politics itself, it is an illusion to suppose that the issue of income tax can be "taken out of politics". Different political parties will have different priorities. If, however, all major budget decisions affecting income tax rates, say, the next five to 10 years, confirm the outlines of this, or a similar strategic plan, the result in the end would be more attractive in every respect than the present situation.

Bernard Levin

Our chance to stem the floodtide of state control

Already we know that much more than half of the country's economic activity is generated or directly controlled by the state, and the proportion continues to grow

in Britain since the modern form of parliamentary democracy was finally established. The residuary legacy of Suez was followed by the hero of the Bank Rate, whatever else was going to dominate politics in the 1950s, when Macmillan was not, nor did it Macmillan as it happened, had real achievements to put into the scale opposite the damage it inflicted and political shenanigans did to the foundations of democracy; Wilson had none. But between them, as I wrote as long ago as 1970, they "managed to empty the decade of political principle and scour the vessel". Had Hugh Gaitskell lived, had Butler beaten Macmillan in 1957, there are the fruitless speculations of idle hours. What we got was what we got; and what we have we have.

What we have is government by expediency. Now I am not so naive as to believe that any democratic government can be free of it; but what we suffer at present is government by expediency and nothing else. Mr Callaghan and his colleagues have trucked to any individual or group with power, and the trucking has included paying any price, however damaging to the country or the people in it, that the powerful broker demands. A single example do we really suppose that Mr Callaghan, who is a decent man though a weak one, and as honourable as he can be within the confines of reality, and certainly not venal or cruel in any sense, do you really suppose that he does not know how grotesquely unjustified is the "closed shop" legislation his Government has put through, or how vile is the spite with which it is already being pursued (and that only a beginning), or for what totalitarian ends it can be applied and, if some have their way, will be? Of course he knows. And do you suppose he wants

whatever else his party is, it is not a party for that effort.

Are the people to live for the state, or the state for the people? No, that is not an over-simplification; not long ago it would have been, but it is not now. Already we know that much more than half of the country's economic activity is generated or directly controlled by the state, and the proportion continues to grow. And if the tide continues to strengthen its grip on the Bullock Committee, it is precisely the fact that he is such a politician, combined with the fact of how he came to be such a politician, and where, being such a politician, he will now go, that convinces me of the necessity of getting rid of him and his Government. For whether the government be Labour or Conservative, there is a critical and urgent need for it to row against the tide. Whatever else Mr Callaghan is, it is not a man for that task; whatever else his Government is, it is not a government for that duty;

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Concern over trade with EEC

The EEC's recent approval lowered by those from Italy (S760.4m). Sales to Italy four to one. Whichever version is used, there is no dispute in the pattern. If Yugoslavia allowed residence for British business representatives as is the case for Yugoslavs in London, the imbalance could be even greater.

Although the same period is covered, there are marked discrepancies between British and Yugoslav statistics for imports from the United Kingdom. The official figure in London for their heavily unfavourable balance of trade with the EEC is £128.45m and in Belgrade \$302.5m.

The respective figures for exports from the EEC in 1976 reached \$3,162.2m and their exports \$1,325.6m. By far the largest single figure was that for purchases from West Germany (\$1,232.7m), followed by Britain, while the trading agreement with the commercial penetration of included transport, fishing,

British put the proportion at 17p per lb (\$760.4m). Sales to Yugoslavia may suggest that the country is doing well in its dealings with the Community. That is not how the situation looks to the Yugoslavs.

They are concerned by their heavily unfavourable balance of trade with the EEC. According to Yugoslav statistics, their total imports from the EEC in 1976 reached \$3,162.2m and their exports \$1,325.6m. By far the largest single figure was that for purchases from West Germany (\$1,232.7m), followed by Britain, while the trading agreement with the commercial penetration of included transport, fishing,

EEC which runs until September, 1978. Most exports enter the Community duty free. But the main preoccupation is to secure improved access for agricultural products. Belgrade is hoping for a complete lifting of the ban by the Community on its baby beef.

Belgrade would like an Anglo-Yugoslav mixed commission similar to those existing with other EEC member states. The British do not see the need for a fresh institution to add to the existing economic links. Yugoslavia already has a number of joint ventures to produce goods for third markets. Yugoslavia has been so successful that they have boosted their initial investment a number of times and some are even planning new ventures. That leads one to believe that the main difficulty is not in making money but in getting the joint venture off the ground in the first place.

D.T.

Springboard to lucrative markets

by Peter Ristic

A decade after Yugoslavia first opened its doors to the foreign investor many foreign companies are still unaware of the enormous profit opportunities offered by a partnership with a Yugoslav company.

Investing in a Yugoslav company gives a foreign company immediate access to 20 million of the world's most dedicated consumers, and it offers much more. It provides the best springboard there is in Europe to the lucrative markets in the developing countries, and Eastern Europe.

Yugoslavia—as a leading force in the non-aligned world—has a bigger advantage than most other countries. That advantage has enabled it to secure some of the lush construction projects which are now in the offing and which present plentiful opportunities for subcontractors.

In Eastern Europe Yugoslavia has what amounts to preferential access. Balanced between the East and the West, it has bilateral trade agreements with the Comecon countries. Those agreements provide for expanding markets and payments in cash. Western companies are usually limited to barter

arrangements—a significant restraint on expanding trade with those countries.

Yugoslavia has in addition all the conventional advantages of a developing country. It has good communications, a pool of well-educated labour and low labour costs—often 70 per cent lower than in the high cost markets of Northern Europe.

But there is more to forming a joint venture in Yugoslavia than realising the advantages, finding a country, signing a contract, and picking up the profits. Joint ventures are only for those with patience and considerable commitment. But before that deters any businessman, it should be said that there are plenty of examples of highly successful joint ventures.

Proof that that is the case is provided by the fact that the heavyweight companies are queuing up to get in the door. Only recently have Chemical and General Motors and Boots of Britain moved in and set up joint companies with Yugoslav enterprises.

Patience is the first requirement for any foreign company looking to invest in a Yugoslav company. Nearly all the foreign companies engaged in a successful joint venture in Yugoslavia complain of the same thing: "negotiations are

extremely protracted. Often they take more than a year. Up to now the Yugoslav authorities have appeared unsympathetic to complaints.

Western companies also find that doing business in Yugoslavia requires a considerable amount of mental agility. The business concepts are different from those in the West and are unique even compared with other socialist countries.

There have to be grasped before any agreements are signed.

The laws are also plentiful and ever changing and a western businessman must be on the look-out for alterations even during negotiations.

That makes it almost essential to have a good Yugoslav lawyer at your side throughout negotiations. A good embassy—and there the British have a natural advantage in Belgrade—is an asset.

A foreign investor would be wise to think of approaching the International Investment Corporation for Yugoslavia (IICY) to get its help in the negotiations. This is provided by the fact that the heavyweight companies are queuing up to get in the door. Only recently have Chemical and General

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VERDICT TONIGHT

Has this Government any further useful purpose to serve? The verdict that the House of Commons returns at ten o'clock tonight will have been reached via careful consideration of party advantage. But that will not altogether obliterate or push aside the fundamental question that is to be resolved. In its devious way the Commons will address itself to that. Certainly the political nation outside Westminster looks to it to do so.

The Government that came into office in October, 1974, had behind it a slender minority of the popular vote. It was equipped with a manifesto containing a list of legislative and fiscal measures which were at best irrelevant to the serious economic malfunctioning of the nation, and at worst aggravated it. These the Government proceeded to ram through Parliament by courtesy of the nationalist parties' obsession with the promise of devolution and the reluctance of any party to force yet another general election. The claim that there existed a popular mandate for all these items in the programme was bogus. Ministers themselves frequently disapproved of them. But they were rigidly adhered to as forming the one political programme round which a querulous party could coalesce.

Paying the price

That phase is over. Most of the manifesto items are now ticked off. We have a different Prime Minister out of a different mould. The constraints from which there is no escaping by a chronically indebted nation at last penetrated the Cabinet room. In the fiscal, monetary and expenditure areas the Government was constrained to row back to policies bearing some relation to the true position of the country. That was at the cost of internal party ructions. The unwillingness of the full Parliamentary Labour Party to endorse the Government's future expenditure proposals triggered off the present crisis. Meanwhile the Government's electoral minority is now reproduced as a parliamentary minority. It accepts the defeat of, accepts the amendment of, or pushes out of sight, legislation for which there is no consensus in the Commons. The Labour Government's socialist teeth have been drawn, as the Tribune MP Mr Neil Kinnock ruefully admits in a letter on this page today.

A renewal of confidence

There is still much to criticize about the Government's policies and attitude, and the strong Conservative objection to the composition of the cuts in planned growth of public expenditure is well taken. All the same there has been a perceptible renewal of confidence in the British economy and polity both in the international financial markets and in domestic industry and commerce. This confidence is tender and of small growth, but if it would be best fostered in the immediate future

His Administration has been weakened by the death of Mr Crosland and the Edgbastonisation of Mr Jenkins. It is still seriously at odds with the national executive committee of the Labour Party and a large slice of the PLP. Its parliamentary position is now so pre-

WEST GERMANY'S NUCLEAR WOES

West Germany has run into a triple crisis over nuclear energy. The Government is under very heavy pressure from the United States and the Soviet Union not to sell a nuclear reprocessing plant to Brazil. At the same time its own domestic nuclear power programme has been brought practically to a standstill by protest groups. This has provoked a worried debate on public order and the failure of political institutions to measure up to the challenge.

The Brazilian deal was signed in 1975 and is worth about £3,000m. It involves the sale of eight reactors, a uranium enrichment plant and a reprocessing unit. The Americans point out that this comes fairly close to selling a nuclear bomb to Brazil, which has not signed the non-proliferation treaty. The Germans say they are imposing tighter safeguards than the International Atomic Energy Agency, and that their commercial credibility is at stake. Both Germans and Brazilians want more independence from American supplies of enriched uranium, which in recent years have been manipulated in ways which do not enhance confidence. Perhaps the Brazilians also want a bomb, or at any rate the political power which goes with the capacity to make one.

It is easy enough to understand German and Brazilian interests but the dangers to mankind that flow from the proliferation of nuclear capability are so great that these interests should take second place. Moreover, if West Germany looks at her wider interests the damage that the Brazilian deal is doing to her foreign relations is likely to outweigh the commercial advantage. Relations with the United States are now seriously affected. The problem of ensuring that developing countries have enough electricity without

carries, with the possibility that impending by-elections will inflict further injury, that respect for its authority and willingness to do business with it may both be affected. It is pursuing policies in the economic sphere which sit more comfortably with the attitudes of its Tory opponents than with those of the Labour Party; and although a socialist government applying Tory measures sometimes has a better chance of making them stick, it is a dispiriting course both for Ministers and for those to whom they look for support. This is a disabled Administration in deep parliamentary trouble. These are substantial reasons, and many will think them conclusive reasons, for giving it the coup de grace tonight.

Talks would go ahead

The Conservatives are not blind to this, and if the words of Mr James Prior, their spokesman on employment, are to be followed it appears that they would seek from the trade union leadership assurances that could hardly be greatly different. The question is which of them is more likely to get what they want. A serious criticism of Labour's "social contract" up to now is that they have paid too high a price in terms of social policy, economic management, and legislative favours bestowed, for the observance of voluntary restraint by the trade unions. In its present parliamentary position the Government is unlikely to be able to repeat that bias.

As for the Conservatives, the "confrontational" noises emitted by some trade union chieftains should not be taken too literally. The trade union movement would be invited to do business with a Conservative Government and the invitation would not be refused. A very large and clear electoral declaration in favour of the Tories would facilitate cooperation. A close result, and trade unionists might be less wholehearted in their acceptance of the verdict. The prospect of a beneficial Labour-union deal must still be reckoned better than that of a beneficial Tory-union deal. And if no deal is to be had, the consequences of this Government's having failed to bring it off would be less ominous than the consequences of a new Conservative Government's having tried and failed.

It is our judgment, then, that this Administration, as it now addresses itself to its responsibilities, and disciplined by the need to look beyond monoparty support in Parliament, still has a useful purpose to serve; and that it would be better were it not turned out of office tonight. This is not to say that its usefulness is of more than limited duration. It is not. By the autumn the things that it is now better equipped to do it will either have done or have failed to do. Nor is this to say that if the vote goes against the Government tonight and a general election is called, the Labour Party will deserve to be returned to power for another five years. It will not.

shifting more and more decisions on to technocrats and bureaucrats, who are even less accessible. They therefore resort to direct action based initially on small groups.

There is probably a good deal in this analysis, which means that the protests have to be taken seriously as a social and political phenomenon, even though they are undoubtedly being exploited by extremists and troublemakers. But are they right on the nuclear issue? West Germany faces energy problems much more serious than those of Britain, which can rely for some time on North Sea oil. If the nuclear programme remains halted there could be serious shortages of power in the foreseeable future, which would be more likely to usher in a harshly authoritarian regime than the semi-pastoral participatory democracy for which some of the more romantic protesters appear to hope.

On the other hand the lightwater reactors are slightly more risky than the type used in Britain... so safety is a genuine issue, even if it has now been inflated. There is also the argument that once West Germany is launched into such a large and expensive programme she will be distracted from research into conservation and future alternative sources of power.

There is, therefore, an urgent need in West Germany for a serious and informed debate on the subject (such as the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution sought to initiate in Britain) so that people at least have the feeling that their institutions are responding to their doubts and elucidating the facts. So far there has been nothing in parliament or outside it appropriate to the magnitude of the problem and the depths of emotion it is capable of touching.

Explanations abound, of course, the most familiar being that people feel helpless in the face of accumulations of institutionalized power. They believe they cannot influence events through the normal channels of political representation, either because party politics are divorced from perceived realities or because the politicians are

The censure motion: coalition or an election?

From Mr Neil Kinnock, MP for Bedwellty (Labour)

Sir, Labour objections to coalition government are not based on the view that they are, in your words (*The Times*, March 21), "a mark of mortal sin" or anything quite so theological.

They arise from experience of coalitions and acquaintance with coalitionists and are rooted in the evidence that coalitions are governments in spite of the people by a self-appointed clique of self-announced "moderates" for the benefit of economic orthodoxy. Their constituents are in the City of London, their rank and file consists almost entirely, dear Editor, of people like you and their manifesto is the FT Share Index. For Labour they are, as Aneurin Bevan put it, a Knacker.

The left does not "feel comfortable"—we would be in politics if we did and neither do we "relish" the opportunities afforded to us by a Tory government. There will certainly be a new scale of anger and industrial warfare if Mrs Thatcher ever implements her *Social Marktirtschaft* policies. But there is no profit for democratic socialism or for Britain in that chaos, misery, insecurity and fear.

So what of an "arrangement" with the Liberals? You seek to disarm with the hope for something which would permit the present Government to stay in office for a bit while ensuring that there would be no extremist measures". What "extremist measures" pray? The most effective wage control policy in modern history? A £5 billion cutback in public spending programmes? A repeatedly demonstrated determination to save the pound and cut the PSBR regardless of electoral consequences? Obviously I have my own critical views of such policies and they are no secret. But only the most jaundiced Establishment eye could regard the Labour Government as "extremist" and only the blindest Liberal leader think of their policies as "full-blooded socialism".

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Hopes for early Co-op merger dashed

By Derek Harris
Commercial Editor

Hopes of getting a final decision at this year's congress over creation of a single federation for the Co-operative movement were dashed at a meeting in Manchester yesterday.

The movement, which first addressed itself to problems of fragmentation as long ago as 1966, was presented with the latest of many plans to produce a more streamlined organization, especially for its retailing operations, but immediately there were signs of a split.

A single national federation, merging the parallel federal bodies of the Co-operative Union (the movement's central coordinating body) and the Co-operative Wholesale Society (responsible for commercial activities) was backed by the special committee set up two years ago to thrash out diffi-

culties which have proved increasingly onerous as retailing competition has grown.

But the interim report of the committee contained an "alternative view" statement put forward, it is understood, by three of the 10 committee members—which said the merger proposal "in the foreseeable future was undesirable and not in the best interests of the movement".

The committee wants congress backing for the interim majority report, so a final report could go to the 1978 congress.

The general view in the movement is that voting on the report could be uncomfortably close at this year's congress or the Spring Bank Holiday. But it might get through because of the weighting of votes.

Unless sentiment changes among the 215 autonomous retail societies, some of which are particularly jealous of their

autonomy—though they would not lose it under a single federation—the final voting on amalgamation could be even more strongly weighted in favour of no change, because on that decision the voting is on the basis of one society, one vote.

Mr Howard Perrow, chairman of the special committee, who is also chairman of the Co-operative Union and chief executive officer of the recently-expanded Greater Lancastrian Society, acknowledged yesterday that the problem was to bring together the traditional democratic control of the movement with the need for an increasingly efficient national selling organization.

He emphasized the growing success of Co-op retailing particularly in the last three years, which has seen a 72 per cent increase in turnover which at the end of 1976 totalled

£2,500m. The Co-op's market share has gone from 6.9 per cent in 1973 to 7.3 per cent last year.

But Mr Perrow felt there was more to play for under a single federation controlled by a national board elected by the retail societies.

Expertise would be pooled, corporate strategy could be set out more readily, and greater specialization in retailing techniques for the benefit of societies would be possible. There was also the hope of increased retail development.

The new federation would be based on four regions with the aim of encouraging merging of retail societies to produce a hard core of 26, which would take at least 10 years.

It would appoint a secretariat led by a chief executive officer to carry out the day-to-day operations largely conducted at the moment by the CWS.

BP may use Finnart for exporting oil

By Roger Vielvoye

British Petroleum is considering turning its oil importing terminal at Finnart, on Loch Long in western Scotland, into an export point for North Sea oil from the Forties Field.

The deep water anchorage at Finnart, which can handle supertankers, is at the BP oil refinery at Grangemouth, on the Firth of Forth, by dual pipelines across central Scotland.

Equipment could be installed to reverse the flow of oil through the lines, enabling the export of oil through Finnart while still retaining the terminal's ability to handle the reduced quantity of imported crude still needed at Grangemouth.

All of BP's oil from the Forties Field is piped from the Cruden Bay landing terminal in Aberdeenshire to Grangemouth, where it is either used at the refinery or shipped to other United Kingdom refineries or exported through a terminal at Fawley Point on the Firth.

An export terminal on the west coast of Scotland has considerable attractions for BP as it would reduce the sea passage time to its Llandarcy refinery in South Wales, and provide the ideal export point for cargoes destined for North America.

It would also ensure that the pipeline across central Scotland was more fully used. Until the arrival of Forties oil, Finnart and the pipelines handled almost all the crude oil from the Middle East and other sources flowing into Grangemouth.

But the flow of imported crude has been drastically cut since the pipeline from Cruden Bay was opened.

Mitsubishi says Shell will revoke tanker order

Tokyo, March 22.—Shell International Marine has notified Mitsubishi Heavy Industries that it will cancel an order for the construction of two liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tankers.

Mitsubishi said it made the lower bid at an international tender for the tankers, each capable of carrying 48,500 cubic metres of LPG, and Shell International gave a letter of intent.

The Japanese yard declined to give further details, but the financial daily Nihon Keizai said Shell apparently cancelled the order because of British Government pressure.

The newspaper said Shell International was expected to place an order for the construction of one LPG tanker with Harland and Wolff in Belfast instead of Mitsubishi, on condition the British Government will cover the cost difference.

Commons vote threat to ship deals

By Peter Hill

Vital new orders for Britain's hard pressed shipbuilding industry have been jeopardized by the uncertainty overshadowing tonight's vote of confidence in the Commons.

Members of the organizing committee for British Shipbuilders, the planned new state shipbuilding corporation, have been involved in detailed negotiations with a number of British and foreign shipowners in the past few months.

It is understood that nine orders had reached a fairly advanced stage and firm inquiries for a further 30 are being explored. But because of developments in Parliament over the past few days which have prompted fresh doubts over the

future of the planned new shipbuilding corporation, there are fears that some of these potential orders may be lost to foreign competitors.

The controversial Bill for the nationalization of the industry received Royal Assent last week after the Opposition's agreement to cooperate with the Government once the Cabinet had agreed to delete ship repair companies from the takeover Bill.

The Tories, however, have reaffirmed their pledge to return the industry to office.

However, if the Government survives tonight's confidence vote, Mr Varley, the Secretary of State for Industry, is expected to announce the formation of British Shipbuilders

next week, and possibly set a date for the vesting of the new state organization. Ministers and Whitehall officials are involved in the final selection of full and part-time members of the board.

Admiral Sir Anthony Griffis, chairman-designate, Mr Ken Griffin, deputy chairman-designate and Mr Michael Casey, acting chief executive of the organizing committee, will be confirmed as the principal executives of the new body.

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BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

Schlesinger throws in a spanner



Standard Trust and the British Rail Pension Funds were yesterday still at the stage of exchanging polite insults over the latter's bid for the former, which closes on Friday, when Schlesinger's proposals for the unitisation of Standard arrived to disconcert both parties and set the sector buzzing.

Shareholders now have to decide whether proposals made so late a stage of the proceedings can possibly be seriously intended; and whether, if so, they are sufficiently attractive to warrant risking British Rail's withdrawal.

Schlesinger now has 15 funds, worth some £70m, under management, so that the addition of Standard's funds would add a half again to the size of the group. That is, of course, assuming that a fair number of Standard's shareholders do not decide that an exit by way of unitisation is just as satisfactory as an exit by way of acquisition, vote in favour of the scheme and promptly liquidate their investment.

In fact, Schlesinger is assuming no such thing, and has allowed for the liquidation of more than half the fund in formulating his proposals. Now there is no doubt that those proposals as they stand are more attractive than the bid which the British Rail Pension Funds have put in: they are on the same sort of formula basis, but against the 128-plus at which British Rail's formula values Standard's shares (on end-of-Figure figures), that of Schlesinger would value them at 145p.

This reflects the fact that Schlesinger is making smaller elliptical yesterday about all these swings and roundabouts in his figures, including the extent of currency gains which for a group with more than half its business outside the United Kingdom must be significant.

At this stage, however, such minutiae are irrelevant, for the fact is that Schlesinger will not proceed with his offer unless it has the backing of Standard's board; and Standard's board is still considering the matter and will, on past form, be doing so for some time yet.

Shareholders, meanwhile, have until Friday to consider the virtues of a bird in the hand (British Rail) as against a bird in the bush (Schlesinger), and I think they might reasonably decide to do nothing. For even if the British Rail Funds do withdraw, the investment trust sector is not likely to be the same again.

A P Cement

Holding margins

Restatement of the last two years' figures to take account of additional depreciation in overseas subsidiaries and associates, the exclusion of its Rhodesian profits and the lower tax charge, caused some confusion in the interpretation of yesterday's full year results from Associated Portland Cement.

Yet adding back the £3m these changes cut out of profits—chiefly on depreciation rather than Rhodesia whose profits were only £3m or so last year—the 15 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £45.4m was no better or worse than expected from the market leader in a sector that has felt the full draught of the fall in United Kingdom construction activity.

As it is, the latest figures demonstrate once again that the main thrust has come overseas, with United Kingdom trading profits down 7.2 per cent at £20.5m, and these would have been lower still but for the 31 per cent export gain. With steady price rises keeping home margins stable, the United Kingdom decline is roughly in line with the national drop in cement deliveries last year and despite its high share of the harder-pressed Scottish market.

The price looks high, but

the latest figures were poorly received yesterday—the shares closed 3p off at 185p—APC's card up its sleeve is that it has already turned into replacement cost accounting while its low stock levels will mean a small cost of sales adjustment under CCA. Historic accounting would lower the p/e ratio some three points from 8.1 while the yield is 7.1 per cent but in a generally dull sector there is no lure in ratings like that.

Final: 1976 (1975)

Capitalisation, £15.0m (—)

Sales, £360m (£280m)

Pre-tax profits, £45.4m (£39.4m)

Earnings per share, 22.6p (18.3p)

Dividend gross, 12.9p (11.7p)

Barr and Stroud

Pilkington

SEWS it up

Both Barr and Stroud and Pilkington PE, the precision optical equipment subsidiary of Pilkington Brothers, send 90 per cent of their sales to the Ministry of Defence, so a reference to the Monopolies Commission, this time, would seem unlikely to prove a problem. Neither is the £6m offer in any way a substitute for UK Optics.

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Plea for flexible cargo sharing pact between major trading nations

By Peter Hill

Calls for cooperative discussions on a flexible cargo sharing agreement between the EEC and other major trading nations were made in London yesterday by Mr Alexander Marshall, managing director of Peninsular & Orient Steam Navigation.

Against the background of their cut price freight policies and the debate in the United States over the reservation of oil imports to American flag ships, Mr Marshall said that there was confusion and uncertainty among the developing nations and the members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

"There is a growing threat of confrontation implicit in the United States and Soviet policies. We know from experience that the industries would ultimately survive in a free

or at any rate we should know, that confrontation makes for instability flowing from the uneconomic use of resources".

Worldwide, he said, there were now 30 nations applying cargo preference schemes; and with the current discussions in America over cargo preference on oil imports, it was sad that the United States, which had declared long range goals of free unrestricted trade and which had contributed so much to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, should be led astray by dubious arguments in the marine field.

Mr Marshall conceded that there was a case for protection of infant shipping industries on a temporary basis, but such protection would only make economic sense if it was known to the public interest from divisive elements should encourage the industry to recognize our common objectives", he added.



Mr Alexander Marshall: world confrontation threat.

EMI extends Toshiba X-ray scanners deal

By Kenneth Owen

Technology Correspondent

In the face of increasing competition in brain and body X-ray scanners from Hitachi in Japan, EMI is extending its agreement with Toshiba to include some local manufacture in addition to assembly and distribution.

Since the end of 1974 Toshiba has acted as distributor for the EMI scanners in Japan. Brain scanners and body scanners have been shipped direct to the market with a body-scanning machine.

In London an EMI spokesman confirmed that by the extended agreement with Toshiba the company was "stepping-up the whole attack on the Japanese market".

Extension of the Toshiba agreement is due to take effect from the end of this month.

Last week a £2,500,000 order for 150 EMI brain scanners for a group of Spanish hospitals was announced, bringing the company's scanner sales worldwide to more than 730, worth more than £150m. Of these, more than 500 have been installed in over 30 countries.

Bonn set for £4,000m spending programme

By Peter Norman

Bonn, March 22

A special ministerial meeting in Bonn this afternoon cleared the way for swift West German cabinet approval of a DM16,000m (nearly £4,000m) medium-term public investment programme and legislative measures adjusting tax rates from the beginning of next year.

The so-called "economic cabinet" met under Dr Hans Friderichs, the economics minister, and Dr Hans Apel, the finance minister, to prepare tomorrow's full cabinet session which is also to discuss revising the Government's energy programme.

Government sources said after the meeting that the investment programme and the tax measures should be approved without any difficulty tomorrow, but there is still uncertainty whether a final decision can be reached on the energy programme.

The investment programme is intended to channel a total of DM13,700m from the federal, state and municipal authorities into projects to improve West Germany's economy over the

next four years, with the remaining funds coming from the private utility companies.

Although the emphasis of the programme is on improving the basis for longer term economic growth, it will give a boost to employment—particularly in the building industry—during the period of its execution.

Dr Apel recently said that orders worth DM3,400m would be placed this year to be followed by an order volume of around DM4,500m in 1978, helping to add between 0.5 per cent and 1 per cent to projected gap growth in these two years.

The tax package, which founded in the Cabinet last week on a dispute over details between Dr Apel and Dr Friderichs, is now expected to be approved without difficulty.

In its main points—which were agreed on by the two ministers—it will raise value-added tax to 13 per cent from 11 per cent at the beginning of next year and distribute about half the additional government revenue between DM10,500m and DM12,000m a year in tax relief to businesses and selected groups of individuals.

Business appointments

Changes on Imperial Group board

Mr P. M. Davies, group secretary, has joined the board of Imperial Group. Mr J. McKinnon becomes finance director, after the retirement of Mr W. G. McPhie. Mr A. M. Reid is to be commercial director of Imperial Tobacco from July 1 and is to be succeeded as assistant managing director by John Player and Sons Ltd by K. G. Robinson.

Mr Alexander Hodge has succeeded Mr Thomas Risk as chairman of Standard Life Assurance. Mr Risk remains a director. Mr Desmond Miskelbow has been made deputy chairman. Mr Ian Pitman has retired from the board.

Mr Brian Shaw, managing director and chief executive of the Furness Withy Group, has joined the board of Grindlays Bank. Mr E. O. L. Vaughan, a deputy chief general manager and a director of Lloyds Bank, has become a director of Grindlays Holdings.

Mr Ian G. Goss has become deputy chairman of the South Eastern Electricity Board on March 14. He succeeded Mr John Wedgwood who was made chairman last month. Mr Duncan McGrath, secretary of the South of Scotland Electricity Board, is to succeed Mr S. F. C. Whitmore as chairman of the South Western Electricity Board on April 1.

Mr Alexander Hodge (left) of Standard Life Assurance, and Mr Allen Russell, now with Leyland Truck and Bus.

BLUE CIRCLE GROUP

The Board of Directors of The Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers Limited announce the following results for the Group for the year 1976, subject to completion of audit, with re-stated comparative figures for 1975:—

| | 1976 | 1975 |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| | £m | £m |
| Turnover | 360.0 | 279.9 |
| Trading Profits: | | |
| UK | 20.6 | 22.2 |
| Overseas | 11.0 | 7.1 |
| | 31.6 | 29.3 |
| Share of Profits of Associates | 16.9 | 15.0 |
| Investment Income | 3.8 | 1.7 |
| | 52.3 | 46.0 |
| Finance Charges | 6.9 | 6.6 |
| Profit before Taxation | 45.4 | 39.4 |
| Taxation | 22.6 | 22.0 |
| Profit after Taxation | 22.8 | 17.4 |
| Interest of Minority Shareholders | 4.4 | 2.6 |
| Group share of profit after taxation | 18.4 | 14.8 |
| Dividends paid and proposed | 6.8 | 6.2 |
| Earnings per £1 Ordinary Stock Unit | 22.8p | 18.3p |

The Board propose to recommend a final dividend of 5.7744 pence per 1 Ordinary Stock Unit of the Company (1975 5.254p) in respect of the year ended 31 December, 1976, which, together with the interim dividend of 2.59 pence (1975 2.35p), makes a total dividend for the year of 8.3644 pence, being the maximum permitted under current Counter-Inflation Legislation.

Group share of profit after tax amounts to £18.4m compared to £14.8m for the previous year, an increase of 24.3%. The tax charge for the year has, however, been reduced by £1.5m in respect of prior years and after adjusting for this, the increase in profit would be 14.2%. This year additional depreciation to take account of inflation has been included in respect of subsidiaries and principal associates and the results of a Rhodesian subsidiary have been excluded in view of the political situation in that country. The 1975 figures have been re-stated on a similar basis for the purposes of comparison. The Group depreciation charge, including additional depreciation, amounts to £24.3m (1975 £20.8m).

The charge for taxation for 1976 consists of £11.7m Corporation Tax, £4.7m Overseas Tax, £5.9m Associates and £0.3m Equalisation.

Due to the reduction in home cement demand and increasing costs, the trading profits from UK operations have fallen by 7.2%. This figure would have been greater, but for our success in increasing exports by 30.8% as compared with the previous year. The already inadequate return on assets employed in U.K. cement operations has fallen still further.

In contrast, operations from overseas showed continued growth notwithstanding the loss arising from the devaluation of the Mexican peso and trading conditions in that country.

The Annual Report and Accounts will be despatched to stockholders on 12 April 1977 and the Annual General Meeting will be held on 5 May 1977. The proposed Final Ordinary Dividend, if approved, will be paid on 16 May 1977 to stockholders on the register at the close of business on 15 April 1977.

H. W. R. Ham
Secretary

22 March 1977

Portland House, Stag Place, London SW1E 5BJ

The Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers Limited

Patent news

Japanese method of cutting steel using water

Approaching one in ten new inventions patented in this country now originates from Japan, thereby laying the old ghost; that the Orient is content to plagiarise ideas from the West.

Matsushita Electric Industrial Company of Osaka, Japan (currently with 50,000 live patents round the world) claims in new British patent 1,457,438 to have discovered an easy way to cut heavy metal. It is already known to cut a swathe through metal, by super-heating a strip with an electric arc and blowing the molten metal away with an air jet.

This, however, produces smoke and other pollution of the surrounding atmosphere. The Japanese claim a rather surprising answer to the technique of blasting a jet of water, rather than air, at the strip to be cut.

In practice, tapwater is mixed with compressed air and the turbulent mixture fed along a hose to what resembles a conventional arc welding tool. Hand-operated valves enable the workman to cut through metal sheet simply by sweeping the double-action tool across its surface.

Radiation health aid

Various schemes have been proposed for sterilizing goods such as surgical equipment after they have been packaged and X-rays, for instance, have been tried. Sulzer Brothers of Switzerland, in BP1 457 996, claim success with gamma-radiation as emitted from radioactive materials.

Although radiation sterilisation is not in itself new, Sulzer propose an answer to one major problem encountered so far. This is that when you bombard anything with gamma-rays they are absorbed and converted into heat, so that the object gets very hot and either destroys itself or its packaging or both.

Sulzer have devised a fully automatic honeycomb of tubes, some containing radioactive rods and others guiding air or water blasts to serve as a super-efficient cooling system. In this way, it is claimed, it is possible to keep the temperature of whatever is being sterilized low, while killing germs trapped inside the sealed package.

Adrian Hope

OECD calls on Swiss to do more about stimulating economy

From Peter Norman

Bonn, March 22

Switzerland, which last year was alone among the industrial countries in bringing inflation to a standstill, is now urged by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development to do more to stimulate its domestic market.

It would like to see Switzerland boost its economy and bring its current account surplus down as a contribution to world efforts designed to even out divergences in the balance of payments of individual nations.

The OECD, therefore, says that Swiss demand management policy should remain expansionary, that a liberal stance in monetary policy should be maintained and that the country's public finance policy should continue to support economic activity. Specifically, it suggests that Switzerland should not be afraid to enlarge its public sector deficit or allow an increase in private demand.

The OECD's annual report on the Swiss economy sees little chance of last year's slight strengthening of economic activity developing into a sustained recovery in 1977.

The expected slowdown in world trade and structural problems in the Swiss economy mean gross national product is likely to rise in real terms by only 0.5 per cent this year after falling 7.6 per cent in 1975 and 0.1 per cent last year.

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Stock markets

Equities bounce back, but trade is thin

Shares recovered a good part of Monday's hefty losses even though many prices were well below their best by the close. Dealers said the main impetus for the advance came from "bear" closing with the longer-term investors preferring to stay on the sidelines until the present political uncertainty is resolved one way or the other. The FT Index was 3.8 better by 2 pm, but as the interest waned it fell back to close exactly five points up at 419.4.

The oil sector is confident that Unilever's forthcoming annual meeting will bring good news on the all-important Indonesian oil project. The word is that it will come on stream several months ahead of schedule originally set for the second half of the year. Profits from the venture alone could eventually reach £8m and transform the group. All this is reflected in the shares which traded at a firm 150p.

In the gilt-edged market, trading was also much lighter with what interest there was centred on shorter dates, where the prospect of another cut in the Minimum Lending Rate acted as an additional incentive. Gains among the "shorts" stretched to five eighths with longer dates ending at or just above overnight levels as recent profit-taking dried up.

Bid activity sprang to life again. Foremost was Barn & Stow, which soared from 175p to 360p, still some way short of the bid price of 590p from Wilkinson. The share was mentioned here as a possible bid candidate earlier this year.

Another to receive terms was F. J. Wallis, a long-standing market candidate, which jum-

ped 16p to 63p after a move by BAT subsidiary, International Stores. Elsewhere, Cavenham was at a weak 126p after a denial that another bid from the parent was imminent.

The Wallis bid prompted a firmer showing from other food shares with Sainsbury up 4p to 159p, Associated Dairies up 4p to 266p, Feijman 2p to 103p and still helped by recent figures, Booker McConnell, which put up 5p to 143p ahead of a statement.

With fears receding that compensation terms might be delayed, shipbuilding shares made

a firm showing with Robb Caledon better by 5p to 75p, Hawthorn Leslie 5p to 55p and Swan Hunter 3p to 85p. In a firm shipping sector, Turnbull Scott "A" rose another 10p to 105p in a thin market. European Yachts were active at 685p and Manchester Liners held firm at 260p ahead of figures this week.

Among the leaders, Unilever soared 10p to 470p and there were rises of 8p from Fisons at 357p, Beecham 443p, Glaxo at 488p and ICI at 357p. Addi-

tionally helped by the chairman's remarks, Turner & Newall firms 6p for a close 162p.

In stores, tax-cut hopes were again the main impetus with GUS "A" advancing 6p to 265p and British Home Stores up 5p to 184p. Ahead of figures, BICC advanced 6p to 123p in electricals where Rank put up 4p to 112p, but Deca "A" slipped 3p to 283p.

In the building sector, profits rather below expectations and a downturn in United Kingdom operations did nothing for AP Cement which slipped 3p to 185p.

Concern over corruption allegations against two subsidiaries left Bryant Holdings 2p lower at 18p. Wm. Press rose 3p to 55p on more bid talk.

The higher oil price continued to benefit the related industries with Deacons up 5p to 40p, Moran 10p to 235p, Warren 5p to 154p and Langbourne 15p to 190p. Companies with hopes for an easing of dividend restraint included James Bamford better by 8p to 202p, Gill Duffus, the commodity group which has also been subject to

Latest dividends

| Company (and par value) | Ord div | Year ago | Pay date | Year's total | Prev year |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| AP Cement (51) Fin | 1.7 | 1.5 | 18.3 | 3.2 | 1.25 |
| Boddingtons' Brews (25p) Fin | 1.5 | 0.75 | 18.3 | 3.2 | 1.25 |
| Bronx Eng (10p) Fin | 1.04 | 0.95 | 12.3 | 1.41 | 1.25 |
| Bury & Masco (175p) Fin | 2.9 | 2.6 | 1.4 | 4.24 | 3.85 |
| C&I Int. Trust (25p) Int | 1.5 | 1.15 | 25.4 | 3.75 | 3.3 |
| C&I Investments (25p) Int | 1.2 | 1.15 | 10.3 | 3.75 | 3.3 |
| Hall Bros Steam (1) Fin | 3.61 | 3.25 | 9.5 | 3.26 | 2.55 |
| Home Count News (25p) Fin | 2.75 | 2.25 | 12.3 | 4.5 | 3.3 |
| John L. Jacobs (20p) Fin | 1.2 | 1.05 | 18.3 | 1.65 | 1.25 |
| Ladbrooke Group (10p) Fin | 2.5 | 2.27 | 4.75 | 4.11 | 3.25 |
| Malayan Tin (25p) Int | 4 | 3.75 | 13.5 | — | 11 |
| Mont. Bldg. Inv (51) Fin | 0.37 | 0.37 | 9.3 | 0.87 | 0.87 |
| Riverside Engineering (25p) Int | 1.57 | 1.57 | 22.4 | — | 5.85 |
| Riverside Rubber (51) Int | 1.5 | 1.45 | 27.4 | — | 5.85 |
| Scott. Nilm Inv (25p) Fin | 1.98 | 1.95 | 2.8 | 2.31 | 2.31 |
| Shama Ware (20p) Fin | 1.17 | 1.05 | 2.4 | 2.14 | 1.95 |
| S. Malaya Tin (25p) Int | 4 | 3.75 | 13.5 | — | 11.75 |
| Temple Distillers (25p) Fin | 1.87 | 1.62 | 28.4 | 2.68 | 2.43 |
| Turner & Newall (25p) Int | 1.34 | 1.4 | 20.5 | — | 3.25 |
| Watson's (25p) Fin | 1.25 | 1.25 | — | 2.95 | 2.83 |
| Weir Group (25p) Fin | 3.19 | 2.9 | — | 4.73 | 4.3 |

Dividends in this table are shown net of tax on pence per share. Elsewhere in Business News dividends are shown on a gross basis. To establish gross multiply the net dividend by 1.54. * As forecast. † Adjusted for scrip. ‡ Cents per share.

Bumper £7.5m from Weir Group - and salt pay-off still to come

Weir Group's position as one of the top three desalination plant contractors in the Middle East barely helped pre-tax profits to forge ahead by 21 per cent to a record £7.5m in 1976; but it stands to make a significant impact this year.

Although the board are looking for more than a "modest" advance in 1977, the bulk of the desalination contracts profit comes through this year and next.

With a Qatar project adding £3m to the desalination workload, Weir now has about £125m of this type of work on its books. Yields for such contracts range between 3 per cent to a maximum 7 per cent, so the aggregate profit contribution for 1977 and 1978 could, if all works well, match the

1976 pre-tax total. No problems have been encountered on progress payments, apparently, so the work is largely self-financing.

At home, Weir has had to provide £740,000 for closure of the Yoker pump factory whose work has been absorbed by the two other pump plants. But the foundry and pump divisions are to receive almost all the £2.5m in capital investment in 1977; and the board reports that orders are far less "lumpy" than last year, for example, output for aircraft industry was almost entirely concentrated in the second half.

The shares were unchanged yesterday at 89p where the dividend of 7.28p gross a share (against 6.6p) yields 8.1 per cent.

Swoop on F J Wallis

BAT tries shops again

International Stores appears to have timed its £66m cash bid for supermarket chain, F. J. Wallis, with uncanny accuracy. Several members of the Wallis board, including chairman Mr. D. J. Glynn, have been ill over the past year and certain others have left.

While the essential management strengths, widely recognized in the market yesterday, have been unimpaired, certain elements of long strategy have gone awry.

Crucially, the F. J. Wallis Settlement, has proved out of step with the aims of the executive board. The bid, which Wallis discovered at around midnight on Monday night, has already been accepted by one Wallis director, Mr. E. T. Blythe, on behalf of the trust and other diverse holdings we also noted in giving International Stores instant control of over 50 per cent.

On tactical grounds, too, Wallis has been left on the starting grid since a new merchant banking advisor, Morgan Grenfell, was appointed only last Friday and would have taken some time to build the ramparts of a defence should, as some expected, Wallis had decided to resist.

In addition, the disruption

and resignations from the boardroom meant that Wallis had to defer investment decisions and, while plans for a five year programme for new larger stores is now under way, the group had been accumulating a tempesting pile of cash. The latest balance sheet for the year to 1 January last shows no overdrafts and cash and short term deposits of £3.94m.

But it is understood that management and Economics of Scale rather than cash are International's chief targets. Wallis pushed profits in its retail trading climate up by 34 per cent last year to a peak £3.1m.

For example, International made £2.1m pre-tax in the year to end-September last on sales of almost £300m. This relative failure is accounted for by the dramatic shift in the retail sector as a whole that has occurred since the economic crisis of 1974. With cost-inflation overtaking price-inflation, economies of scale are the major priority.

It is doubtful, given a 10 per cent cost of money charge, whether International has "wasted its face" since its £62m acquisition by BAT Industries. The board are stepping up International's "re-cycling programme" with 500,000 sq ft of large store development starting to come on stream this summer.

Ray Maughan

It is problems have been profound. A total of over 300 stores, almost a third of which the autumn of 1975 in an attempt to build an increased average outlet size into the portfolio.

It is no coincidence that Wallis operates at an average floor space of 5,000 sq ft per 2,000 sq ft per store greater than International, whose margins bear scant comparison.

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Ray Maughan

Y. J. LOVELL (HOLDINGS) LIMITED

MAIN GROUP ACTIVITIES: Building, Residential and Commercial Developments, Plant Hire, Timber Importing and Merchandising

A year of success

SUMMARISED RESULTS

| | 1976 | 1975 |
|--|--------|--------|
| Group Turnover | £2000 | £2000 |
| Trading Profit before Taxation | 47,337 | 39,515 |
| Profit before Taxation | 1,525 | 1,382 |
| Ordinary Dividend 8.45p per share (1975-2.11p) | 683 | 649 |
| Earnings per Ordinary share | 10.7p | 10.4p |

(* as approved by the Treasury on increased capital)

Extracts from Address to Shareholders by the Chairman, Peter Trench

... While we are still obtaining our fair share of quality enquiries for construction we steadfastly refuse to take contracts at uneconomic prices. I am, however, more optimistic that the residential and commercial development sectors could see a return to confidence this year. Because of its close relationship to housebuilding this applies equally to our timber division.

... The overseas market must be taken seriously and it is in shareholders' long term interests that we broaden our geographical base.

... Despite the gloomy prediction for the industry generally, as a group we have started the present year well and I am not too despondent about finishing the year in reasonable style.

Lovell

We've passed our eleven plus.

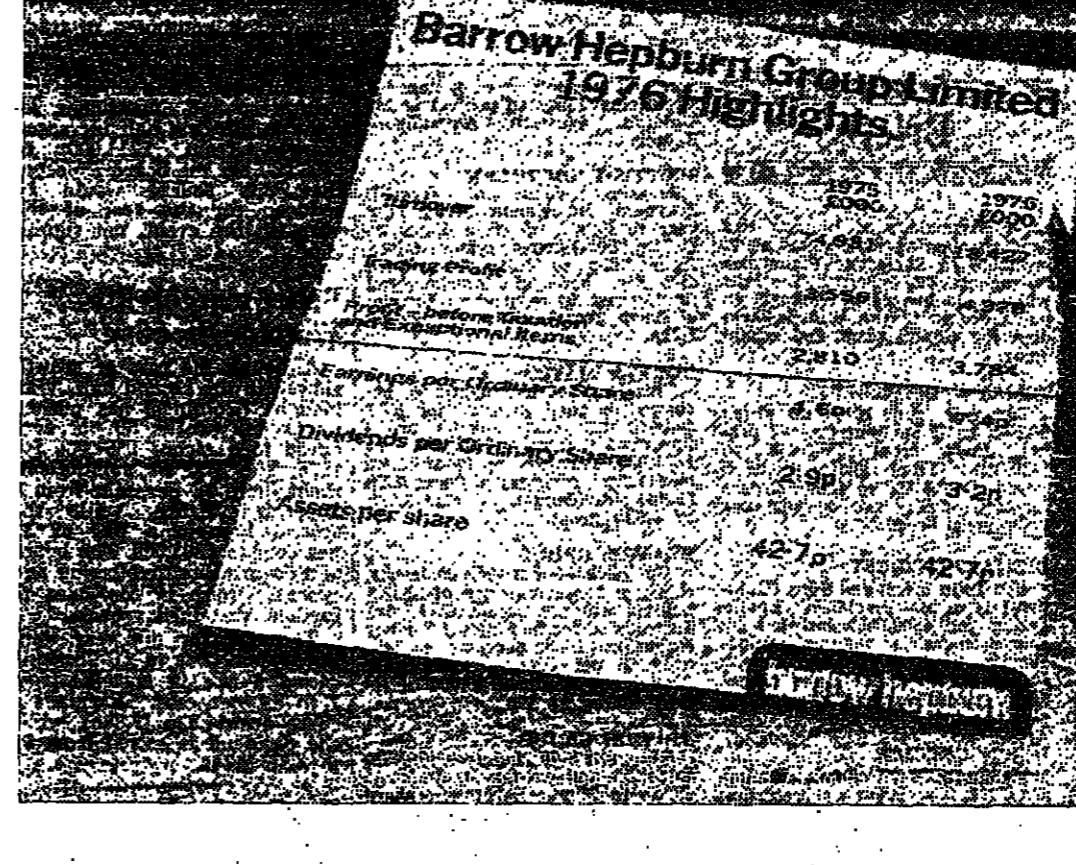
For the eleventh consecutive year overall trading profits for the Barrow Hepburn Group

whole increased both turnover and profits.

The Chemical Division has provided the main boost to group profits, and investment of more than £1m in this Division represents a little over half of all new investment for the year.

Although the economic climate has been far from ideal, Barrow Hepburn Industries has also managed to maintain profit levels.

Exports have increased by 68 per cent. Group profit for 1977 is expected to show further improvement.



IMPERIAL GROUP LIMITED

Extracts from the statement by Mr. John Pile, Chairman, at the Annual General Meeting held in London on 22nd March 1977

PROFITS AND INVESTMENT

The increase in Group profit before tax from £106.8 million to £129.6 million, a rise of 21.3%, was no bad performance in a year so full of gloom in British industry. The need for greater profitability in British industry is now more widely recognised. The profits of Imperial are not yet great enough for the good of the total enterprise, but nevertheless, in the current year we are planning to spend in excess of £80 million on new fixed investment, some £30 million more than last year. We are sure that this is right in the long term interests of our Company.

PRICE CONTROL

With our considerable continuing success in the market place we would normally have expected to provide this new investment out of cash flow. We will, of course, make every effort to do so, but the effect of the Price Code over the last 3½ years has been to erode our profits and those of other companies to the point where the Code itself became ineffective. It is now intended to alter it with new provisions apparently dictated by power politics.

The proposals would be to bring to commercial decision-taking a whole new area of uncertainty. Uncertainty is the enemy of planning and therefore of investment. Price control should be abolished in its entirety. The market place will ensure, as it does at present, that prices remain fair. Increased profits should be actively encouraged by Government so that British industry can regain the strength to develop the factories and

products and the skills which, together, can enable us to prosper.

MANAGERS

Disillusionment is widespread amongst managers at all levels. They feel undervalued, and they are. The management of our Group is second to none; those of us who have visited companies and business schools in other countries can testify to that. But thousands of managers and professionally qualified men have already left this country for places where their skills are better appreciated – including, I am sad to say, some men from this Company. And those, usually with little experience of industry, who speak slightly of the British manager should be asked – "Why then is he so keenly sought after by firms in other countries?" It is to be fervently hoped that our present Chancellor will show his understanding of this problem in a practical way when he speaks next Tuesday, and that whatever agreement the Government may make with the TUC on the next phase of the pay policy, the plight of the manager will not once again be overlooked.

SMOKING AND HEALTH

I am pleased to be able to say that our Tobacco Division, together with the rest of the UK industry, has continued to have a good working relationship with the Department of Health and Social Security. To quote the Secretary of State when he announced details of a new voluntary three-year agreement

FINANCIAL NEWS

Boddingtons' flout lager trend but keep house flag on high

By Nicholas Hirst

Boddington's, the Lancashire brewery, continued to produce the taste of success last year with a 37 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £29m, on a 41 per cent sales rise to £149m.

Against the trend, Boddingtons' lager sales declined, because, Mr Ewart Boddington, chairman, believes, drinkers visit Boddingtons' pubs to drink Boddingtons' beer, not lager.

Indeed, the popularity of Boddingtons' beer continues to rise. Sales of its own beer, which accounts for 89 per cent of sales, rose 25 per cent by volume against a national average increase in sales of only 11 per cent.

The company's volume has

increased by 116 per cent in the past five years and the management is investing a further £21m over the next two years to increase capacity; and currently there is £2m cash in the balance sheet.

Capacity will rise by nearly a quarter in a fortnight, and an increase of a third will be available if required within a month.

Demand shows no signs of slackening. Sales to the free trade rose 9 per cent of the total last year compared with 5 per cent in 1975, and Boddingtons' is still able to exceed in the outlets it chooses to supply.

Tenancies are continually being sought while the beer sales per pub, at an average

of 17 barrels a week, continues at a high level.

Despite projections of increasing lager sales which could account for half of the United Kingdom beer market within the next 10 years, the company is sticking to its policy of trying to brew, although it will continue to sell lager on its trading arrangements.

The group believes it is well placed to combat the growing market share of lagers. Its beer is a light colour, is kept largely in cooled cellars, and benefits from the cult exalted by the Campaign for Real Ale.

The year's dividend is being increased to 5.38p with a final of 2.3p gross. Earnings were 9.06p per share.

tion and possible development of Minesfield's tungsten project at Mt Mungie, Western Australia. Reuter.

SCOTTISH NORTHERN
Pre-tax revenue of Scottish Northern Investment Trust for year to Feb 5 up from £1.3m to £2.1m. Total gross payment rises from £35.5m to £36.4m. To reduce disparity between interim and final trust is to pay an interim of 1.84p gross on Nov 5, against 1.25p.

BURTON DISTILLERS
Turnover for 1976 up from £6.98m to £7.5m, but pre-tax profits down from £108,000 to £430,000. Total gross dividend from 3.75p to 4.13p. Orders for new whisky are 30 per cent up, reports board.

BENJAMIN PRIEST
Benjamin Priest and Sons (Holdings) Ltd, Birmingham, England, for £250,000, satisfied by shares or cash at vendors' option. Blackheath is a private company in the West Midlands and manufactures cold formed and machined products.

UNION CARBIDE
Malibogue—Minelands Exploration NL has signed an agreement with Union Carbide Corp subsidiary, Australian and New Zealand Exploration Co (ANZECO), for further explora-

TIOXIDE GROUP
Sales for 1976 rise from £22.3m to £24.5m, pre-tax profits from £3.5m to £20.5m. Earnings a share are 43.5p (22p). Dividend is held at 22.5p gross. Group controlled by ICI Lead Zinc and Federated Chemical Holdings.

stake in FMC and wound up with a major stake in the merged company.

The Borthwick directors also told Mr D. Dabchishin, FMC's chairman of the role that the existing FMC operations would play in the new group and what the board representation of FMC and the NFU Trust would do.

The FMC board will be writing to shareholders soon with advice on the offer of 125p cash, or seven Borthwick shares for every six FMC, as the lower offer from NFU. Meanwhile, shareholders are advised not to sign any documents.

Borthwick has been trying to convince FMC that the two groups are compatible and that its aim is to develop British meat sales in world markets.

Borthwick also outlined its own idea of the benefits which would accrue to NFU if it accepted on its 47.8 per cent

stake in FMC—about 51 per cent of the equity.

For its part, FMC has emphasized the importance of the present large shareholding of NFU and suggested an early meeting with the trust.

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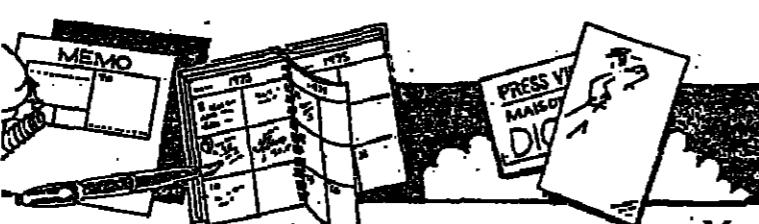
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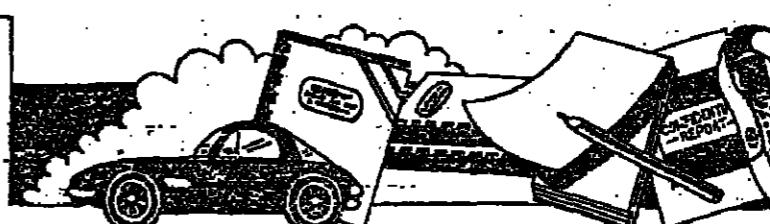
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All recruitment advertisements on this page are open to both male and female applicants.

Secretary c. £3,500 p.a.

We are looking for a lively, intelligent person with a good telephone manner to join a team of professionals in the international hospital management business. Our company, which is a subsidiary of an American public corporation, is currently recruiting all types of personnel for the King Faisal Specialist Hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. In addition to general secretarial duties, the job will involve frequent liaison with colleagues in our Middle East and United States offices and also responsibility for processing candidates' files from interview through to assignment overseas. Good typing and shorthand ability are essential.

Please write or phone:

Clare Mooney,
HOSPITAL CORPORATION
INTERNATIONAL LTD.,
33 Cavendish Square,
London W1M 0AA
Tel: (01) 491 3211

**HOSPITAL
CORPORATION
INTERNATIONAL**

INTERNATIONAL FINANCE COMPANY TELEPHONIST/RECEPTIONIST

Well spoken, responsible and flexible person required as telephonist/receptionist/person Friday. Duties to include Reception/Switchboard/Filing, telex, typing and any miscellaneous job as necessary. G.P.O. training and knowledge of French or Spanish would be a distinct advantage. Age immaterial. Excellent salary and holidays. L.V.'s, pension scheme and life insurance. Please write with full details to:

Ms Susan Kelsey,
DASHWOOD FINANCE
Royal London House,
16 Flinstone Square, London EC2A 1ER
or telephone 01-588 3215.

DIRECTOR'S PERSONAL SECRETARY

S.W.1
who likes a challenge, thrives on responsibility and needs little supervision, required by Goodhews, Hoteliers & Licensed Caterers, based in S.W.1. Excellent shorthand and typing speeds are, of course, essential.

In return, we shall give you a salary of £3,500 per annum, depending upon age and experience. Free restaurant lunches and membership of a non-contributory pension scheme.

Interested? Then please ring 01-222 4401
or write to: Mrs. J. Swann, Goodhews, Burwood House,
16 Caxton Street, London, S.W.1.

LEGAL AUDIO SECRETARY KINGSLEY NAPLEY & CO.

require two secretaries—one to handle conveyancing and the other civil litigation. Shorthand is not necessary, but the successful applicants will need to have a good educational background, fast and accurate typing and preferably around 5 years' experience. Salary £3,000 p.a. subject to review in June plus L.V.s. The offices are centrally and conveniently situated opposite Covent Garden Underground.

Please telephone 240 2411 Ref. R.B.
(to arrange interview)

P.A./SECRETARY £3,500

FOR SMALL, VERY BUSY BUT INFORMAL,
MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY, OXFORD
CIRCUS
Good education and experience essential.
Telephone Mrs Ward
01-580 4907

Personal Secretary/P.A.

Required by Partners of a London based International firm of Chartered Quantity Surveyors and Project Managers near Old Street tube station. Personality and initiative needed in addition to good all round secretarial ability. Duties will include deputising for Partners in their absence. Salary negotiable c. £2,400. Please reply in strict confidence to Box 0564 J, The Times.

SECRETARY/PA £3,500-£3,750

GERMAN/ENGLISH Bilingual
Secretary, keen to find job with friendly and energetic colleagues. Requires a good knowledge of German and German shorthand, plus previous experience in a court. Multilingual Services 22 Cavendish Square, WC1 01-581 3704/5

FRENCH COSMETICS

Intimate, beautifully appointed South Kensington office/showroom requires mature person to take charge of correspondence, contact with clients, office administration, telephone and easily manageable accounts control. Must be thoroughly reliable, capable and use own initiative. Permanent position in pleasant atmosphere. Good for suitable applicant. Ring 584 8747

SENIOR SEC £3,500 + Bonus

PA to work for senior
director in international
firm of accountants and
advisers. Good shorthand
and typing ability. Lots of
client contact. Superb office
Product discount. 4 day week
considered.

JAYGAR CAREERS
730 5148

£3,000+ P.A.

If you can sell or be trained to sell, have a capacity for really hard work and are seeking an interesting and challenging career, you could be the person that we are looking for. We are able to offer you 4 weeks' 3 days' paid holidays after the first 6 months, and 5 weeks' after a year, a subsidized restaurant and first-class conditions in a new, air-conditioned office building. In addition, we will see that you have intensive training to help you be successful, and the opportunity to earn over £3,000 per annum, including bonus.

So, if you are suffering from a lack of challenge and stimulus, apply now for a job in The Times Telephone Sales Department selling the benefits of Classified Advertising in one of the best newspapers in the world, helping private and professional people get the best results from their advertisements.

Consider your job now, then ring Brian Wexham for an interview on

01-837 1234 extension 7115

DEPARTMENTAL SECRETARY

Educational Broadcasting

The Independent Broadcasting Authority has a vacancy for a Senior Secretary required for the Technical Manager of its Educational Programme Services Department at the London Headquarters. The Department is functionally related to educational broadcasting by means of discussion and liaison with the independent programme companies and those involved in all aspects of education.

In addition to the requirement for first class secretarial training and experience, the post calls for someone able and willing to be a good representative of the Authority to external educational departments, the efficiency of which can be greatly influenced and enhanced by the secretaries' display of qualities of tact, tact and diplomacy. Duties will include some monitoring of schools programmes, dealing with viewers' complaints, liaison with educational bodies, including educational bodies, including professional associations, local education authorities, the local and national inspectorates and D.E.A. and the like. The post will also involve some travel. A mature approach and a background in the educational field would therefore be a distinct advantage.

The salary will be in the range £3,270 to £3,765 (including pay and allowances) plus £100 per annum for a non-contributory pension scheme. For further details and an application form please telephone 01-837 7011, ext. 380, or if you prefer write to: Mrs. J. W. Lloyd, Personnel Manager, Educational Broadcasting Authority, 70 Brompton Road, London SW3 1EW.

SECRETARY FOR MD c. £3,250

Managing Director of international office/rental organisation requires an efficient, self-reliant secretary/PA for the UK division's new head office at Watford. Age 25+, with at least three years' experience in similar post. Knowledge of French would be an advantage. Please write giving personal history, telephone number and quoting reference SMD/CC to:

TRANSPORT INTERNATIONAL POOL LTD.,
Star House, 69-71 Clarendon Road,
Watford, Herts.



SECRETARY TO SALES MANAGER

This is a responsible position requiring first-class secretarial skills and the ability to work as part of a team. A good organizer and able to prioritise and manage time effectively. The work is varied and there is considerable scope to expand. Luxurious offices, convenient West End location.

Salary from £3,000 to £3,500
write or telephone Valerie Hills
KANDYA MEREDEW LTD.
2 Ridgmount Place
London WC1E 7AG
01-580 0383

Secretary/P.A. to the Managing Director

Are you a superb organiser with first-class secretarial skills, including Audio? If the answer is yes, you should be working for the Managing Director of this rapidly expanding, go-ahead company. Conditions are excellent and the rewards amply meet the demands.

Phone Mike Newby now at Solus Schall, Annabelle House, Hornsey, Middx. 01-572 4221.

SECRETARY For Publishing Company

To £3,500

Director and General Manager of a major Newspaper/Magazine Publishing House requires a Secretary. Good shorthand and typing required plus ability to work on own initiative.

Please telephone today:

MRS POSTLETHWAITE,
UNITED NEWSPAPERS LTD.,
23-27 TUDOR STREET, LONDON, EC4Y 0HR.
TEL: 01-582 7199.

S.W.5 SECRETARY/SHORTHAND TYPIST

required by small Export Company. Knowledge of export documentation, simple ledger and telex an advantage. Applicants must have pleasant personality and be able to work on own initiative. Permanent position in pleasant atmosphere. Good salary/bonus. Age 20-early 30s. Salary £2,000 p.a.
TELEPHONE 01-882 3261/3

FINANCE FIRM, W.I.

require competent Secretary for friendly office. Good shorthand and good typing ability. Some knowledge of computer and word processing. Salary £16,000 p.a. Age 20-28. Ring 01-734 1855, Ext. 265.

Personal Assistant

having shorthand and good typing, previous office experience. Must be presentable and able to work part-time. Salary £16,000 p.a. daily. Phone Call Cowan 493 2723 Alfred Marks Bureau 271 Regent Street, W.1.

Ring 626 7031.

SENIOR SEC
£3,500 + Bonus

PA to work for senior
director in international
firm of accountants and
advisers. Good shorthand
and typing ability. Lots of
client contact. Superb office
Product discount. 4 day week
considered.

COSMETICS

Senior executive needs well
educated PA/sec. with good
shorthand ability. Lots of
client contact. Superb office
Product discount. 4 day week
considered.

JAYGAR CAREERS
730 5148

'A' LEVEL SCIENCE?

£3,500 +

Senior Secretary required for the Technical Manager of our international Company, Guinness Overseas Limited, located at Park Royal.

Interesting and responsible position for candidates with "A" levels in a science subject and good secretarial skills.

We can offer

Commencing salary from £3,500 according to age and experience

Pleasant working conditions in modern office block

Electric typewriter

Free lunch and 25 days holiday

Profit share and non-contributory pension.

Please telephone 01-955 7700 ext. 3308 or write stating age, qualifications and experience to Miss A. P. Lloyd, Assistant Personnel Manager (R), at

GUINNESS,
Park Royal Brewery
London, NW10 7RR

Personal Assistant to U.S. Managing Editor

£3,500-£4,000 Mayfair

A challenging and demanding job for personable and experienced PA who is free to become enthusiastically involved, works without supervision, is self-organized and can persuasively organize others, possesses excellent secretarial skills and good publishing experience.

Please call Jane Roth of
FINEX PUBLICATIONS LTD
on 01-495 8241/2
31 Curzon St, London, W1.

Finding yourself a new job isn't that easy—especially when you know your worth as a secretary—and it can be disheartening! When you've been to a company, been shortlisted and then refused, you need encouragement and help. Monica Grove or one of her colleagues at her employment consultancy—29 St James's Street (0191 1082)—will offer helpful advice, won't waste your time sending you where you don't want to go, and will outline several possibilities. Our tight selection for our clients makes the odds much more in your favour than if you go direct to a company—that's where we can be of help.

U.S. OIL COMPANY

Manager spending TWO Weeks monthly overseas seeks an experienced

Executive Secretary

Located in Europe. She must be dynamic, reliable and free for heavy working and travelling. Excellent shorthand a must.

Top class candidates only should apply with C.V., photo and salary expectations, quoting phone number to 8303

MARIE GILBERT—CONSEIL EN RECRUTEMENT
43, rue de la Victoire 75009 PARIS—FRANCE
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DIRECTOR'S SECRETARY

Mature secretary required by Director of Company in Mayfair concerned with projects in France and the U.K. Good working knowledge of French is necessary as occasional trips to France are likely to be involved. Pleasant personality, good educational background plus first-class shorthand and typing skills. Attractive benefits, good salary, luncheon vouchers and many other benefits.

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£4,500 PA WEMBLEY

A really exciting position exists in an international U.S. owned company. The successful applicant will be responsible to the Managing Director for varied duties which require an energetic, responsible approach.

New offices based at Kentish Town, N.W.5.

Salary around £3,500 plus bonus plus 20% staff discount.

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telephone 01-582 5551.

Telephone 01-626 4545 ext. 1
for an application form.

SECRETARIES
c. £3,000

Wine Trade

We require secretaries with good aptitude and at least 2 years' experience. A number of Executives who have recently moved office to Bromley, Kent, S.E.1, in the last few months, will be offered good working free conditions including 3 weeks' holiday this year.

Telephone 01-600 7133 and ask for the Personnel Officer.

adventure

63 South Molton St., W.1.

SECRETARY
£3,500

SECRETARY/PA

Part-time. Bon to work for Senior

Partners. Bon to work for Partners.

Must be smart and able to work with pleasant clients.

Salary c. £3,500 p.a.

Telephone Guthrie Brown on 01-463 2504/2522 now.

HUDSON PERSONNEL

Ring Ann Lucas 01-469 2271

SECRETARY
£3,500

SECRETARY/PA

Part-time. Bon to work for Senior

Partners. Bon to work for Partners.

Must be smart and able to work with pleasant clients.



To place an advertisement in any of these columns, telephone Private Advertisers only 01-837 3311

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Business to Business 24

Contracts and Tenders 24

Domestic Situations 24

Entertainments 24

Financial 24

Fraternal Sharing 24

For Sale 24

Le Cremo de la crème 27 and 28

Legal Notices 24

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Property 12, 13 and 14

Public Notices 24

Recruiting 24

Secretarial Appointments 24 and 25

Services 24

Situations Wanted 24

Wanted 24

Box No. 1000 should be addressed to: The Times, 20 Queen's Gate, London SW7 1PT.

The Times, 20 Queen's Gate, London SW7 1PT.

New Prints 24

Grey's Inn Road 24

Deadline for cancellation and alterations to copy 10 a.m. is 12 noon prior to the day of publication. The deadline is 12 noon for the 24th March issue. Step Number 24 will be the advertiser. On any subsequent issues regarding the cancellation, this Step Number 24 will be the advertiser.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD. We make every effort to avoid errors. All copy is carefully checked and printed when it is handed in. Any day mistakes do occur and we will correct them at your end. If you spot an error, please contact our advertising department immediately. (01-7200). We regret that we cannot be responsible for more than one insertion if you do not.

"AND seek the peace of the city; if for in the peace thereof shall have peace."—Jeremiah 29: 11.

BIRTHS

KEARNS.—On March 21st, at the Victoria Hospital, to Wendy (neé Dunkley) and Leslie Braithwood.

DICKINSON.—On March 21st at the Royal London Hospital, to Alison (neé Smith) and Duncan.

DURHAM.—On March 21st, to Angela (neé Davison) and Michael (neé Smith) (son Edward Durham).

BOYD.—On March 21st, at Ripon Maternity Hospital, to Julie (neé Maycock) and Michael Boyd.

BRAWOOD.—On March 14th, at the Royal London Hospital, to Wendy (neé Dunkley) and Leslie Braithwood.

DICKINSON.—On March 21st at the Royal London Hospital, to Alison (neé Smith) and Duncan.

DURHAM.—On March 21st, to Angela (neé Davison) and Michael (neé Smith) (son Edward Durham).

EVANS.—On March 21st at St. George's Hospital, to Peter (neé Segali) and David (son David).

EVERETT.—On March 18th, to Lillian (neé Jackson) and daughter (Katherine Jane).

CARLSON.—At West London Hospital, to Glyn and Michael (daughter) Carlson.

GRANADIN.—On March 21st, 1977, at Croydon, to Irene (neé Cummings) and Michael (neé) Granadin.

LLOYD.—On March 21st, to Linda (neé) and John (son John).

SWIFT.—On March 21st at Princess Royal Maternity Hospital, to Michael (neé) and Margaret (neé) Swift.

TURNER.—On March 21st, to Hospital, to Brian (neé Brian) and Diane (neé Diane) (son Edward Brian).

BIRTHDAY

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, Mark. You're driving us mad—Patrick, Dee and Lou.

MARRIAGES

ALL: WEDDING.—On March 19th, in Kensington, Mahsud, son of Mr. and Mrs. Farid and Mrs. Farid, and wife, Faridah, to Jeanine, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Farid, of Sweden and Scotland.

FUNERAL

HARRIS, LESLIE TAYLOR.—Funeral.

HARRIS, LESLIE TAYLOR.—Funeral.